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GOD, CHRIST, AND THE CHURCH



THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE

*"I am the way and the truth and the life ; no man cometh
to the Father, but by Me."*

GOD, CHRIST, AND THE CHURCH

Catholic Doctrine and Practice Explained

With Answers to Objections
and Examples

BY

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Preface

THE purpose of the following pages is to offer a concise, comprehensive, and clear explanation of Catholic doctrine and practice.

Among Catholics there are few who will not welcome more detailed instruction on some point or another of the doctrine and practices of the Church than is contained in the school Catechism, whereof the explanation perhaps long ago escaped their memory. It is of greatest importance that every Catholic should be well informed on all matters pertaining to the Faith, especially at a time when the Church is assailed by a flood of argument and denunciation whose stream receives its supply from the inexhaustible reservoirs of misrepresentation.

In many instances, let us charitably trust, this misrepresentation is unintentional, and caused by misapprehension of the doctrines and practices of the Church. In these pages we endeavor to explain to such as sincerely seek the truth the Catholic teaching concerning the existence of God and of man's relation to Him; of our redemption through Christ's atoning death, and of the means of grace left by Him to His Church for our salvation. The explanations are ex-

pressed in terms as simple and familiar as to make their meaning apparent to all. The language used is not intended to please by its elegance of style, but to improve the mind and move the heart by the instructions conveyed. The objections are briefly refuted, and appropriate examples serve to illustrate the subject.

It is obvious that a work of this kind must be, of its very nature, a compilation: new doctrine can not be advanced. It was, however, the compiler's aim to present the ancient Christian truths, as delivered to the Church by the apostles, in a form adapted to the needs of the present time. This compilation, then, is a summary of Catholic doctrine drawn from many approved and learned authors.

In conformity with the decrees of Popes Urban VIII and Leo XIII, the compiler submits everything contained in these pages unreservedly to the infallible judgment of the Catholic Church, and claims credence only inasmuch as his statements agree with her teaching.

List of Authors

ADAMS, Catholic Dogma.

BAUTZ, Elements of Christian Apologetics.

BRORS, S.J., Modern Alphabet.

COPPENS, S.J., A Systematic Study of the Catholic Religion.

DEHARBE, S.J., Explanation of the Catechism.

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LINDEN, S.J., Manual of Religious Instruction.

MEHLER, Examples of Christian Doctrine.

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ROH, S.J., Mission Sermons.

SPIRAGO, The Catechism Explained.

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PART I

God



THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD

*"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;
hear ye Him."*

CHAPTER I

The Existence of God

RELIGION is based on the great and fundamental truth of the existence of God. The belief in the existence of a Personal God is the necessary premise of Christianity.

GOD:—with reverence and awe we pronounced the word in our childhood, and written in characters of fire it illustrates the universe and enlightens our mind. The idea of God stands at the threshold of our life, and is the most consoling thought at its end. The stream of time rolls on; generations sink into the grave, but above the millions that pass away shines immutably, like a sun in the heaven of spirits, the idea of God, and the created mind incessantly re-echoes the everlasting truth: "I am the Lord thy God."

Because God is a Spirit, He can not be seen with corporal eyes. Nevertheless, we know for certain that there is a God: for He revealed Himself to man. Among the various evidences of the existence of God we deem the following sufficient, because they are convincing:

1. The *physical* argument. 2. The *moral* argument. 3. The *supernatural* argument.

1. The world, or visible creation, did not originate of itself. What would we think of a man who, for instance, showing us St. Peter's

church in Rome, would, in all seeming sincerity, contend that this imposing masterpiece of architecture came into existence of itself; that the stones floated ready made down the Tiber, joined themselves accidentally with mortar, that part added itself to part until the whole grand edifice was completed? Should we not judge such a man demented? But what is St. Peter's church in comparison with the universe? And the latter should have come into existence of itself? How can a sane man pretend to believe this?

Therefore, though we do not see God with our corporal eyes, we discover Him by means of the visible world around us. "The Heavens show forth the glory of God, and the firmament declar-eth the work of His hands." (*Ps. xviii. 8.*)

Again, we know God by the *order, regularity* and *adaptation to its purpose* which governs the world. The existence of this order needs no proof: it is shown in the course of the stars, in the growth, diversity and propagation of the animals and plants, and reaches its culmination in man. Now arises the question: How did an organism, for instance, that of man, with all its laws, organs, arrangements, beauties, etc., originate? Even the most feeble intellect, and especially the simple mind not perverted by prejudice, sophistry and malice of heart, comes to the conclusion that certain effects in the world are intended by the means employed to cause them. He perceives that the eye is intended for seeing,

the ear for hearing, etc. He laughs at the atheist's argument, who contends that we see because we have eyes, etc., and at the theory of evolution, according to which our having eyes, ears, etc., is *accidental*.—Now, the Being who endowed our senses with their faculties must be All-wise and Almighty. Where there are such supremely wise laws there must also be a supremely wise Lawgiver. And this Lawgiver is the All-wise and Almighty God, the Creator and Lord of heaven and earth.

2. There is a law written in the heart of man which commands him to perform good and to avoid evil actions. This law is found wherever a human being exists—with the savage races as well as with the civilized nations, with the men who obey it, and with those that transgress it. This law is called *Conscience*, and of it St. Paul writes: "The law is written in their hearts, their consciences bearing witness to them." (*Rom. ii. 15.*) But *whence* this law? We did not give it to ourselves, and we can not change or remove it at will. Man has not given himself this accusing judge; therefore, it must have been given to us by some one outside and above us. It is God, the infinitely wise and holy God, who makes Himself known through the voice of conscience, and who, even here below, by it punishes the transgression of His law. And as God, by the voice of conscience, proclaims Himself to the sinner as the avenging and chastising Lord, thus also does

He show Himself as the Recompenser of the just. Hence the placid tranquillity, the undisturbed peace, the sweet consolation of the just man even when his good works are unknown to the world. Indeed, the just man feels in a special manner the presence of God in his soul, and experiences His love and protection: he is thereby more firmly convinced of God's existence than if he saw Him with the eyes of his body.

Everybody, therefore, who is of good will can know that God manifested Himself to man by the creation and government of the world, and by the voice of conscience. As a result, all nations are unanimous in their belief in the existence of a Deity. Hence Cicero writes: "There exists no race so savage and barbarous as not to know that there is a God whom we must worship. And as this knowledge was not obtained through persuasion or agreement, not through statutory enactments or laws, this consensus of all nations must be regarded as a law of nature."

3. Much better, and with greater clearness than by means of the visible creation and the testimony of conscience, we learn to know God through *supernatural revelation*. By this is meant all that was revealed to us by God for our salvation, through the patriarchs and prophets, and finally through His Son, Jesus Christ. For God was not content with giving us the light of reason to attain the knowledge of the truth, but for love of us deigned to become Himself our

Teacher. He condescended to instruct mankind: first through the patriarchs and prophets, and finally through His own Divine Son. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets: last of all in these days He hath spoken to us by His Son." (*Heb. i. 1, 2.*) Without this divine revelation we should have attained the knowledge of many truths of salvation with difficulty, insufficiently, and most of them would have remained entirely unknown to us.

Nothing demonstrates the necessity of divine revelation more convincingly than the errors into which mankind fell when the nations strayed away from it. And yet the infidels of our day make the most strenuous efforts to deprive us of this greatest gift of God. They hate the divine light, and therefore endeavor to extinguish it, and to substitute in its place their dreary, disconsolate so-called rational doctrine, which leaves us painfully uncertain about everything relating to God and concerning our eternal destiny, a doctrine which even effaces the essential difference between virtue and vice, and which, if reduced to practice, would necessarily lead us back into the barbarism from which we were rescued by Christianity.

OBJECTIONS

1. *The idea of God originated in the fear of the powerful forces of nature, and the belief in*

Him was fostered by crafty priests and law-givers.

The fact that all nations, civilized and barbarian alike, have believed in the existence of a Supreme Being, is a proof that they regarded Him as the Author of the natural forces, as the Creator of nature, and worshiped Him as such. The priest can not make religion; on the contrary, religion makes the priest. The lawgiver can not make religion; he uses it for his purposes.

2. Nature produces much that is superfluous.

As yet, scientists are not so far advanced in their knowledge of nature as to be able to fathom and explain all its purposes. We do not contend that this earth is absolutely perfect, or the best that God might have created; but we do maintain that it is suited to the purpose for which God created it. This purpose does not preclude, but rather includes, the existence of so-called evils, that is, of misery and sufferings, for the earth is the place of man's probation. This probation consists in trials and afflictions. If there were no sufferings here below most men would cling too closely to the things of this world and neglect and forget their eternal destiny. Trials and sufferings draw man's attention to things higher and better. Our Creator permitted these physical evils in the world to lead us thereby to greater moral good. Therefore, instead of a proof against the existence of a Creator, they are an evidence of His wisdom and goodness.

In objections like these sight is lost of the fact that all things have a double purpose: an *internal* one, their own perfection, and an *external* one, the benefit which they confer on beings of a higher nature.

3. *Conscience is a human invention, and once invented it was inculcated in others by education.*

A truly remarkable invention indeed! How the inventor got the idea that he would be punished if he neglected to perform good actions and committed evil ones, how this idea came to him which above all others is calculated to make him unhappy, remains unexplained. Still more remarkable is the fact that all mankind continues to be governed by this "invention," and that even we, in this progressive twentieth century, can not rid ourselves of this disquieting idea, which inspires the best and noblest of men with fear.

And this idea, we are told, was instilled into man solely by education. An entirely wrong conception! True enough, education awakens in the child its slumbering conscience, but it *creates* it no more than it creates the intellect, which it also awakens and develops. If conscience were simply the result of education we might be able to forget it, as we forget so much of the things we learned through education. Let us ask our own conscience: are its teachings, demands, and reproaches not quite different from whatever else we learned? How commanding, how forcibly it asserts itself, reminding us of a lawgiver whose

law we have transgressed! And why do we not suppress this annoying monitor, just as we long ago discarded the fables of our childhood? If the voice of conscience be a deception, then criminals and murderers are more enlightened people than they who, from fear of offending God, refrain from harming even their enemies.

If effects, however, are ever evidences of the truth and reality of a fact, it must be the case here. Whosoever hears the voice of conscience and fears God, also performs good works, has due regard for the life and property of his fellow-man, is, in the true sense of the word, a man of honor. How can an idea which produces such noble fruits be an illusion, a deception, a fancy? But the man that has no regard for truth and justice, who has "no conscience," that is, does not listen to its voice because he long ago discarded it—does he not show by his actions that his "conviction" can not originate in the truth?

It is, therefore, incontrovertible: Deeply engraven in human nature there is a law that unmistakably points out to us a supreme Lawgiver and just Judge—God. Whosoever denies this denies, ignores, and contradicts his own nature.

4. *If the existence of God is so clearly demonstrated, how is it that so many learned men, so many famous scientists are unbelievers?*

True, many learned men and scientists are unbelievers. But they are not led to the denial of faith by the results of their experiments; the true

cause of their infidelity must be sought elsewhere. Whosoever believes in God must also believe in a lawgiver who demands obedience to his law, in a judge who punishes its transgression. Finding the observance of the commandments difficult, unbelievers try to reason themselves and others into the denial of God's existence.

Pride is another cause of unbelief. Faith in God requires submission of the intellect to mysteries, and the pride of some scientists rebels against it.

Again, shallowness and superficial knowledge is a frequent cause of unbelief. Bacon, the English philosopher, very aptly writes: "Whoever merely tastes of the cup of science is easily led away from God; but he that drinks deeply of it is led to Him." Many of these learned men confine themselves to one branch of science, and neglect and despise all others. Finally they lose the faculty of conceiving anything not relating to that branch.

Example

THE ASTRONOMER'S GLOBE

The celebrated astronomer Athanasius Kircher had an infidel friend who resisted all attempts at conversion. One day this friend came to visit him. The astronomer, seemingly engaged in important work, paid no attention to him. Looking

about the laboratory, the visitor espied a beautiful astronomical globe. He was much pleased with it, and asked his friend who made it and to whom it belonged. Kircher replied: "I do not know anything about it. It must have come here by accident." His friend replied: "This is ridiculous. Who can believe such an absurd statement?" And Kircher rejoined: "You will not believe that this globe came into existence by accident, and yet you deny the existence of the Creator of its great original."

CHAPTER II

The Creation

Moses, the divinely inspired historian of the creation, relates: "In the beginning God *created* heaven and earth." (*Gen.* i. 1.) Observe: it is not said that God made the world by shaping a material already at hand. Whence should He have taken it? How long must it have been in existence? Necessarily from all eternity, and then it must also have been endless. But if it was endless—eternal—in one respect, it must have been so in all respects. In this case, then, there would have been two eternal existences, which is contradictory. Antiquity had no clear conception of this; even Plato was not sure. But the Christian philosophers, St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, and the Protestant Leibnitz cleared away the clouds of doubt, and made further controversy impossible, so that all assertions to the contrary of the materialistic school shall not revive it.

Moses does not say that God *generated* the world, that He produced it from out of His own essence. God's essence is indivisible, not composed of parts: if it were, it would be mutable. Where God's essence is, it is necessarily entire. Hence, if God had produced the world from out of His essence, the divine essence would be fully

in the world and the latter would be infinite. Is the world infinite? It is great; its grand proportions astonish us; God has impressed it with the seal of His own great workmanship: yet, is there anything besides this seal necessary to convince us that the world is not infinite?

Therefore the world is neither generated by God nor produced from out of His essence. It is *created* by God. To create is to give existence to a substance without using for its production any pre-existing substance: to make out of nothing. "God said: Let there be—and there was." This is to create.

Man, whose nature is endowed with a feeble imitation of all the active potencies of God, is not gifted with creative power. He shapes, he uses material, but he can not create. He may produce works of the mind or the hands that command the admiration of the world, but he can not create. To create is the sole prerogative of God. So incomprehensible is the mystery of creation, that we are at a loss to find the right expression for it. There remains for us only the humble acceptance of the words of revelation: "In the beginning God created heaven and earth."

And this very expression vindicates for the Mosaic narrative of creation its peculiar significance. Man can not create, he can only adapt, put in order, change. For this reason some philosophers regarded God also as a Being who merely originates order; others regarded crea-

tion as a kind of emanation, and according to their idea the individual beings emanated from God's essence. Moses alone states with comprehensive brevity: "God *created*."

Four thousand years later, after all the efforts of a Plato, of an Aristotle, had proved futile, when it seemed impossible to prove the reality of the creation, the Church headed her Creed with the declaration of her belief "in an Almighty Creator of heaven and earth." A sublime statement, but to be substantiated it must rest upon a most solid foundation.

Some scientists, elated by the discoveries made in geology and astronomy, imagined they had found an invincible argument against the Mosaic history of creation. They said that our terrestrial globe, in order to become habitable, had to undergo changes which it took milliards of years to accomplish. They said that in the heavens there are stars whose light has ceased; this again presupposes the lapse of millions and millions of centuries: from which theory they conclude that creation is in a manner eternal, and that its beginning dates back to a period unfathomable to the mind. We open the pages of Sacred Scripture and find there two statements that tell us that the world, the work of God's creative love, is not eternal, but had a beginning: "*In the beginning* God created heaven and earth" (*Gen. i. 1*) and, "*In the beginning* was the Word." (*John i. 1*.) And *when* was the beginning? It

belongs to time: but when did time originate? Holy Scripture does not tell us. Therefore we are at liberty to place it at so remote a period as seems congruous with certain sure indications. Faith is not affected thereby.

What we remarked of the beginning is true also of the end. Science declares that in place of the stars that were extinguished and disappeared from the heavens, there appear others, and that many millions of miles from us there is a number of celestial bodies that are now undergoing all the changes that our earth underwent. And why should God cease to create? The creation, in its realization, is consecutive and continuous. The various worlds are similar to human souls: they are created continually. Why should God have had but one plan? How would we judge an artist who during his whole life painted but one picture, a musician who always repeated the same strain of melody? We should call them unproductive, and justly so. Why should God act thus miserly and stintedly? Why should He deny Himself the pleasure of producing, in the course of centuries, various kinds of physical creation? As fire continually emits sparks, thus creations may incessantly emanate from the infinite, almighty, and loving will of God.

Certain scientists vindicated for the world not only an existence without a beginning, but also a duration without end. Infinite duration involves a contradiction, and the untenable theories of for-

mer centuries were abandoned. The discovery of the law of gravitation and the invention of the telescope subverted them. The earth lost the central position which ignorance had assigned to it, and the sun's true position was discovered. We learned that the sun is almost one and one-half million times larger than the earth, and that the latter is distant from the former ninety-three millions of miles. We learned that the earth and its sister planets moved around the sun, some of them at an almost inconceivable distance. The group of stars called the Milky Way, for instance, is of a length to traverse which from one end to the other would take fifteen thousand years. As to the number of the stars comprised in that group, seventy-five millions of them are known, and the discovery and enumeration of others still continues. It belongs to the stellar system which encircles the sun like the planets, at a distance of a milliard and one hundred and forty-seven millions of miles. Moreover, the visible stars of this group, which can be observed and described, are by far not the most wonderful. In the spaces between them, where the unaided eye sees only darkness, the telescope discovered something resembling gold dust—stars, the number of which is beyond computation. By the aid of the telescope the eye sees groups of stars that appear like a web of light. And what is that other shimmer gleaming in the heavens which can not be reached even with the aid of the telescope?

Other Milky Ways, other groups of stars, to explore which we must wait for the improved telescope of the future. And beyond those groups others and others, till we are lost in incalculable distances.

The Creation therefore fills, like all time, also all space. "The heavens show forth the glory of God, and the firmament declareth the work of His hands." (*Ps. xviii. 2.*) He is a creative God, whose infinite love is intent upon our happiness, our bliss.

We now come to the question: What is the world's purpose? Everything in heaven and earth is in constant motion. All things tend toward an object. Toward what? Three answers only are possible: Either the world tends toward annihilation, or toward God, or it moves in a continuous circle and will reach neither God nor annihilation.

Can the world tend toward annihilation? An appalling thought; an idea contrary to reason and science. The latter declares that nothing is annihilated, that everything changes, is reconstructed, but not one atom is demolished. Here faith and science are in perfect harmony.

Does the world move in a continuous circle? In our days some maintain this view. Abhorring annihilation, but not believing in God, they have recourse to the theory of continuous reproduction, even to the antiquated doctrine of transmigration of souls. But the latter also either leads to the

infinite or is an obstacle that makes this theory untenable.

This is the Creation, its purpose, its character. In the beginning love, truth, beauty, goodness, the supreme good: these divine attributes were its starting point; they are its object. Let us adore and love the Almighty Creator of heaven and earth; let us cherish above all the Faith that reveals these wonders to us.

OBJECTIONS

1. *Everything originated in the course of centuries through chemical action and successive changes.*

According to this theory matter is eternal and evolution is a self-acting process. Science in its every branch—astronomy, biology, physics, chemistry, mathematics—proves that the spirit did not emanate from matter. Whatever is devoid of life can not generate life.

The acceptance of the evolution of living organisms from lifeless ones is unscientific. Recourse to this theory is had only for the purpose of evading the necessity of acknowledging the Creator. Professor Virchow writes: "So much is clear: If I do *not wish* to believe in a Creator . . . if I insist on clinging to my own theory, this theory must result in evolution." Such a course is unscientific; for a friend of truth does not consult his wishes, but his reason when there is question of truth.

2. *Everything is God, and God is everything.*

The universe is God; all things in the world are but manifestations of the one God.

This doctrine is called Pantheism. It is justly reprobated by all reasoning men; for Pantheism is absurd and immoral. It is absurd, for it is silly to assert that man, animals, and plants are but various manifestations of the one great Deity. Reason clearly and conclusively proves the untenability of this view. But some people demand a moral code that panders to their sensuality, and Pantheism offers it to them. It destroys human liberty, morality, and responsibility. Pantheism is a pleasant, but false, absurd, and godless doctrine. The universe is not God, but there is a God who is its Creator, Lord, and Judge.

3. *God does not meddle with the human race and with the world in general.*

This theory is incompatible with the doctrine of creation. Disjoining God from man and from the government of the world, it is the practical denial of God's existence and leads to actual atheism, because the God whom it proclaims and who has no relations with His creatures is chimerical.

Example

THE ROYAL THRONE HALL

Once upon a time a king invited a number of princes to dine with him in his new throne hall. This hall was a grand and artistic triumph of architecture. The immense arch which formed

its vault was without a single pillar to sustain it. The walls were hung with costly tapestry, and beautiful carpets covered the floor. Proud of his grand apartment, the king, after dinner, led his guests through it and listened with great pleasure to their expressions of approval and admiration. Now the court fool, in olden times a privileged person, addressed the king in presence of the guests. "My lord king, I know a much more beautiful and artistic hall than this." And approaching a window, he showed the assembly the beautiful view. Then pointing toward heaven, he said: "Do you see the immense canopy of heaven up there? Not a single pillar upholds it, and yet it stretches immovably above the universe: is it not far greater than the vault arching this hall? And behold the beautiful carpet of flowers bedecking the ground! Does it not surpass these carpets woven by the hand of man? And do you know how all these things were called into being? They were created by the sole word of God. The great Architect beyond the skies did not need to employ human laborers, or stones and mortar or money to bring them into existence. What do you think of it?" The guests in silence looked at the king, and thought in their hearts: "Verily, this time the fool has spoken words of wisdom."

We so often admire the works of man's art; but we have no consideration, no sentiment of gratitude for the grand universe built by the power of the Almighty.

CHAPTER III

Man

LIKE unto a beautiful palace furnished with the greatest splendor the earth came from the almighty hand of its Creator. But as yet that creature, for whom it was destined, was absent, the rational being who was to make use of it in the service of the Creator was missing. And God said: "Let us make man to our image and likeness, and let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea and the fowls of the air, and the beasts, and of the whole earth, and every creeping creature that moveth upon the earth." (*Gen.* i. 26.)

Remark here the expression, "Let us," etc. It is the first indication we have of the mystery of the Trinity of God. That there is a God we are told by reason and faith, as was demonstrated; but that there are three Persons in God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, we know by *Faith only*. It is a mystery, a truth which we can not comprehend.

The Mosaic history of the creation continues: "And God created man to His own image: to the image of God He created him, male and female He created them. And God blessed them, saying: Increase and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it." (*Gen.* i. 27-28.) When God cre-

ated the rest of things He said, "Let there be," etc. But when He created man He, so to say, took counsel with Himself, and thereby indicated that there was question of a very superior work. Of man alone it is said: "God created man to His own image: to the image of God He created him." Is there not distinctly and unmistakably expressed in these words the high and incomparable prerogative of man above all other visible creatures? Man is God's image! What is implied in these words we shall see later on.

Finally all creatures on earth are placed under man's dominion; for they are to serve man according to their nature, and he himself is to be God's subject and servant, the lord of the universe.

Concerning the manner and method of man's creation Moses writes: "And the Lord God formed man of the slime of the earth, and breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul. And the Lord had planted a paradise of pleasure from the beginning, wherein He placed man whom He had formed. . . . And the Lord took man and put him into the paradise of pleasure to dress it and to keep it. And He commanded him, saying: Of every tree of paradise thou shalt eat. But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat. For in what day soever thou shalt eat of it, thou shalt die the death. And the Lord God said: It is not good for man to be alone: let us make him

a help like unto himself. . . . Then the Lord God sent a deep sleep upon Adam: and when he was fast asleep, He took one of his ribs, and filled up flesh for it. And the Lord God built the rib which He took from Adam into a woman and brought her to Adam." (*Gen. ii. 7-22.*)

The body of the first man, then, was formed out of the earth, hence he is called *Adam*, that is, earth-man. But this body was a form without life, without sensation. Then God breathed into it the breath of life, that is, He created the human soul and united it with the body: and only then was man a living being. The Mosaic expression, "God breathed" is used to indicate that unlike the body, the soul was not formed from a material already at hand, but proceeded directly from God and was, like God, a spirit.

Man, then, consists of body and soul. His body is mortal, his soul is an immortal spirit. Even if man's body by death is separated from his soul and returns to dust, the soul shall live forever, because it is a simple, spiritual substance not composed of parts into which it could be dissolved: it is immortal. In this the soul is God's image, who also is an immortal spirit. Our soul shall live forever as God lives forever. True, God might annihilate our soul, just as He gave it to us; but it is His will that it live forever. By this great prerogative the soul appears as God's image, because God's immortality is reflected in its own immortality.



OUR LORD CALLS TO HIM ALL WHO ARE BURDENED

*"Come to Me all you that labor and are burdened, and
I will refresh you."*

The soul of man is, moreover, endowed with *intellect* and *free will*. These two qualities belong to its nature. The *intellect* is the faculty by which we think, by which we distinguish good from evil and truth from falsehood. The *will* is the faculty by which we are inclined to or repelled from anything. The human will is *free*; we may will something to which no force compels us; we may even will the contrary of that to which we feel impelled. This free will, which man alone of all earthly creatures possesses, also makes him the image of God; for God is free in all His actions. Our soul is therefore God's image because it is an immortal spirit endowed with intellect and free will; and as these qualities belong to man's nature, we call it the *natural* image of God.

The holy Fathers and theologians moreover regard man's soul as an image, a glorious reflection of the uncreated Trinity of God. For as we discern in the Deity three Persons, thus we also discern in our soul—first, the existence, the being; secondly, the intellect, and thirdly, the will. The being is not the knowing, and the knowing is not the willing. We are convinced of this by our own innermost perception whenever we know or will anything. We recognize it also by the fact that whilst we sleep, the soul ceases not to exist, although it then neither knows nor wills; also, because we know many things which we nevertheless do not will. Hence, as the soul's ex-

istence is not its intellect, and its intellect is not its will, thus we also disjoin its existence from the intellect by which it knows, and the intellect from the will by which it wills. Nevertheless, the soul is a simple spiritual being without component parts. As the three Persons in God are not three different beings, but one and the same God, the undivided and indivisible divine essence: thus in our spiritual nature existence, intellect, and will are not three parts, or three essences, but one and the same soul, one and the same undivided and indivisible spiritual essence. Moreover, as the Father generates the Son, who is the Father's essential image and perfect intelligence, and as the Holy Ghost, who is their mutual Love, proceeds from the Father and the Son: thus also, in our soul, the intellect proceeds from the existence, and from both proceeds the will or love; for we will or love only what exists and what we know. And as the infinite bliss of the Tri-une God consists in His being eternal and His knowing and loving Himself in a most perfect manner: thus also our highest happiness consists in our immortal soul's knowing and loving God for all eternity. Thus our created soul is a true image of the uncreated Trinity. (St. Aug., Confess., B. xiii. 11.)

Nevertheless, this created image is far beneath its divine prototype. For although we discriminate between the existence, the faculty of intellect and the faculty of will in the one soul, yet

there are in it no three persons. Moreover, our existence had a beginning, at present our will and intellect are limited, deficient, variable, unstable, whilst God is immutable, because in Him existence, intellect, and will are the same eternal, infinitely perfect divine essence.

Besides endowing the first man with the *natural* gifts of existence, intellect, and free will, He also bestowed upon him gifts of a *supernatural* order. They were chiefly: First, sanctifying grace and with it the childhood of God and the right to heaven; secondly, enlightenment of his intellect and preservation of his will from concupiscence; thirdly, exemption from afflictions, sufferings, and death.

These gifts are called supernatural because they are not, like the natural ones, essential endowments of our nature, or part thereof, but a supernatural largess of God's grace, which the Creator was free to grant or withhold, and by withholding them from the first man He would in no manner have acted against His wisdom, goodness, and justice.

Adam received sanctifying grace, by which he became the image of God, and all the other extraordinary gifts connected therewith—supernatural knowledge, exemption from concupiscence, the happy life in paradise, etc.—not only for himself, but also for all his descendants. All of us, who are of Adam's progeny, were to inherit these gifts from him. According to God's

plan we were to be born in the state of sanctifying grace, with excellent qualities of the mind, without concupiscence; we were to dwell happily in paradise forever without suffering death. All this, however, under the one condition that Adam would not sin. If he sinned, these gifts would be lost to him and his descendants.

OBJECTIONS

1. *All things are force and matter. Matter is eternal. The first living beings were evolved casually from inert matter. Man is descended from some man-like ape.*

This is the Darwinian theory. Materialism, denying God's influence on the world, hastened to make it its own. On what evidence is it founded? On certain similarities which appear in the various kinds of living beings, and which are claimed to be hereditary; on certain changes originating in the process of crossing, or in external circumstances of the battle for existence, etc. Professor Virchow, an acknowledged authority, but an infidel, says in this respect: "There is certainly not one positive fact known that evolution would occur in such a manner that inorganic matter ever developed spontaneously into an organic substance. Nevertheless, I concede that, if we desire to demonstrate how the first being came into existence from itself (how this is to be accomplished remains unexplained), there is nothing left but to have recourse to evolu-

tion. . . . For if one insists that he will not accept the fact of creation, but nevertheless desires an explanation, nothing else remains."

"Man is descended from a man-like ape." There is so great dissimilarity between man and the ape that this theory is untenable. The difference exists above all in the fact that man is a being possessing a soul endowed with reason and free will, while the ape is not. Evidence of this is that man by his reason progresses from invention to invention, whereas the ape, like the rest of brute animals, acts by instinct now just as it did thousands of years ago. It has not learned to build dwellings, cook victuals, etc. Its imitative instinct does not warrant the conclusion that its actions are the result of reasoning. The bodily structure, too, of man and the ape are widely different. This is especially true regarding the size of the brain, and the connection between the head and the vertebræ, by which the upright posture of man and the horizontal position of the brute animal is effected. "The anatomical comparison is entirely against the descendency of man from the ape." (*Bumüller.*)

Were this theory correct, there must be evidences of the gradual transition from ape to man. But such evidences do not exist: they are found neither at present in living man or animal, nor in their fossil remains of past ages. Professor Virchow writes: "There never was found a fossil ape skull, or man-ape skull, that ever belonged to

a human being. . . . We can not teach, we can not prove scientifically that man is descended from an ape or from any other brute animal."

2. *What you call the soul is an antiquated notion; there is no soul. Thought and will are actions of the brain alteration of matter. All the so-called powers of the soul are effects of the brain, the same as gall is the product of the liver. Without brain no thought, and no exercise of the will.*

It is self-evident that these assertions are gratuitous. The agencies of nature must necessarily produce their material effects: the liver must generate gall, warmth must melt ice, etc.: but I must not do this or that; I must not follow even the strongest impulse, I can resist it. My will is free: its organ, that organ of my mind by which I reason and reach conclusions, is the soul. Views which consider the acts of the mind and will as mere mechanical results of the change of matter are unscientific.

That the human mind acts in connection with the brain is no more surprising than that the musician acts in connection with his instrument. The normal or abnormal quality of the brain greatly influences the activity of the soul.

3. *But as long as no special soul-substance is found and its effects are not demonstrated physically, the theory of an immaterial soul has no scientific value.*

For the very reason that thoughts can not be

measured physically, because they are not confined to space and are indivisible; because they include the past, the present, and the future, the natural and the supernatural, we are convinced that they do not belong to the material world, but that the means whereby these purely mental ideas are conveyed must be a simple, indivisible, and therefore imperishable substance, which thinks and wills within us, and which we call spirit or soul. It is a postulate of logical thought that for the acts of a soul that thinks and wills other powers must be accepted than physical and chemical laws. If we refuse to believe that we have a soul, how can we account for the possibility of retaining in our memory so many of our thoughts, of recollecting them long after their first impression on our mind? Hence a child who answers the question, "How do you know that you have a soul?" by responding, "Because I am able to think, because I have a free will," shows greater wisdom than a supercilious scientist who, contrary to all rules of logic, will accept the existence of an immaterial means of an immaterial mental process only after its materiality has been proved, after he can see, smell, and taste it. Because the soul is an immaterial spirit it is silly to seek to find it with the senses. Spiritual beings are to be sought and can be found only with the spirit, the intellect. It is through our intellect that we know that we possess a spiritual soul.

Examples**GALENUS AND EPICURE**

Galenus, a famous physician of antiquity, once said to the atheist Epicure: "Contemplate your body and its wonderful construction, and then tell me if you still can doubt the existence of a deity. I will give you a hundred years to investigate whether there is a single mistake to be found in the structure of the human body, or whether you might change the order in which its members are arranged without destroying at the same time its beauty, usefulness, harmony, and power. Not a man, only a God, was able to create such a splendid masterpiece."

ST. AUGUSTINE AT THE SEASHORE

St. Augustine tried to solve the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity. He spent nights and days in deep meditation in order to write a book on this great doctrine of the Faith. One day whilst walking along the seashore thinking on this subject he encountered a little boy, who was busily engaged in dipping water from the sea into a little ditch which he had dug out with his hand. Augustine asked him what he was doing. The boy replied: "I am trying to dip the sea into this ditch." The saint remarked: "My child, that is impossible." And the child rejoined: "I shall more easily dip the sea into this ditch than you can fathom the immense and incomprehensible mystery of the Most Holy Trinity." And the

boy disappeared. God Himself had instructed St. Augustine by means of a heavenly vision.

AN INSTRUCTIVE DREAM

Gennadius, a physician at Carthage in Africa, did not believe in the immortality of the soul. One night he dreamed as follows: He saw a beautiful youth clothed in white garments standing before him, who asked: "Do you see me?" He answered: "Yes, I see thee." The youth again asked: "Do you see me with your eyes?" The physician replied: "No, they are closed in sleep." The youth continued: "How, then, do you see me?" The physician rejoined: "I do not know." Now the youth asked: "Do you hear me?" The physician said: "Yes, I hear thee." The youth: "Do you hear me with your ears?" The physician: "No, they are asleep." The youth: "How do you then hear me?" The physician: "I do not know." The youth: "Are you speaking now?" The physician: "Yes." The youth: "With your tongue?" The physician: "No." The youth: "How do you speak then?" The physician: "I do not know." Finally the youth said: "Behold, you are asleep now, and nevertheless you see, hear, and speak. A time shall come when you shall be truly dead, and yet you will see, hear, speak, and feel." The physician awoke and acknowledged that God had instructed him, by means of a dream, on the immortality of the soul.

CHAPTER IV

The Fall of Man, and Original Sin

BESIDES the excellent gifts inherent in human nature, God had endowed our first parents with the great prerogative of sanctifying grace. Through it man was exalted above all other created beings; he was, in a certain sense, made partaker of the divine nature, became the image, the child of God. Sanctifying grace was to be the source whence sprang his glorification, the beatific vision and possession of God. But in calling man to such a destiny He treated him as a free agent. He did not force him to accept it, but permitted him to merit it if he so chose. This was another evidence of divine goodness; for a self-merited bliss must be more highly valued by man than one forced upon him. But this liberty of choice was fraught with danger: it left the possibility for man to cause his own eternal damnation if he should abuse his free will and rebel against God, his creator and benefactor.

And Adam committed this perverse deed, a deed all the more execrable because the act of obedience which was required of him was not a difficult one, but very trifling in itself, little more than a formality by which he was to acknowledge the supreme right of the Creator to his obedience. He was forbidden to eat of the fruit of



THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

*Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart
like unto Thine.*

a certain tree: this was all that was required of him to prove his submission: a mere omission, which in comparison with the rich gifts granted was in itself not difficult.

Moses relates the occurrence as follows: "Now the serpent was more subtle than any of the beasts of the earth, which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman: Why hath God commanded you, that you should not eat of every tree of paradise? And the woman answered him saying: Of the fruit of the trees that are in paradise we do eat: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of paradise, God hath commanded us that we should not eat: and that we should not touch it, lest perhaps we die. And the serpent said to the woman: No, you shall not die the death. For God doth know that in what day soever you shall eat thereof, your eyes shall be opened: and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And the woman saw that the tree was good to eat, and fair to the eyes, and delightful to behold: and she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave to her husband, who did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and when they perceived themselves to be naked, they sewed together fig leaves and made themselves aprons. And when they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in paradise at the afternoon air, Adam and his wife hid themselves from the face of the Lord God amidst the trees of paradise. And the Lord God called Adam and said

to him: Where art thou? And he said: I heard Thy voice in paradise, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself. And He said to him: And who hath told thee that thou wast naked, but that thou hast eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat? And Adam said: The woman, whom thou gavest me to be my companion, gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said to the woman: Why hast thou done this? And she answered: The serpent deceived me, and I did eat. And the Lord God said to the serpent: Because thou hast done this thing, thou art cursed among all cattle, and beasts of the earth: upon thy breast shalt thou go, and earth shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed: she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel. To the woman He also said: I will multiply thy sorrows, and thy conceptions: in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children, and thou shalt be under thy husband's power, and he shall have dominion over thee. And to Adam He said: Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat, cursed is the earth in thy work; with labor and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the herbs of the earth. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return to

the earth, out of which thou wast taken; for dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return." (*Gen. iii. 1-19.*)

Thus began that extreme misery which continues to oppress the human race. Here we have the solution of the problem that no other part of creation appears in such disorder as mankind; for man is a degenerate being, and our first parents' disobedience is the cause of this degeneration.

The misery into which Adam's sin cast all his posterity consists not only in death and other temporal evils, such as afflictions, pain, etc., but also in the transmission of sin, the death of the soul, to all mankind. Thus declares the Council of Trent: "Whosoever says that by his sin of disobedience Adam transmitted only death and temporal punishments to all mankind, and not sin also, which is the death of the soul, let him be anathema." For he contradicts the apostle, who says: "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death, and so death passed upon all men, in whom we all have sinned." (*Rom. v. 12.*)

After Adam had committed sin, his sinful *deed* was over, but the sinful *condition* which it had caused remained. He had lost sanctifying grace, that state by which he had been rendered pleasing to God. By that grace his soul had been rendered just and holy, as God had created it and willed it to continue; it was now unjust, unholy, guilty.

By sanctifying grace man's soul possessed the supernatural life of a child of God; by sin it lost this supernatural life, and was, so to say, dead to God.

This, then, was the sad condition in which Adam's soul was after committing the sinful deed, and this sinful condition, this death of the soul, is also called and truly is sin, because it is evil and displeasing to God.

This sin was transmitted by Adam to all his posterity. Not all men have eaten of the forbidden fruit like Adam, but the sinful condition of the soul which followed that act was transmitted to all mankind. Adam had received sanctifying grace for all his descendants, and by his sin lost it for all: hence all men are now born without sanctifying grace, in a condition displeasing to God, in the state of sin, and thus defiled by sin they enter the world: they are born in the state of original sin.

Sin, besides causing the loss of sanctifying grace to our first parents and their posterity, also darkened their intellect and weakened their will, inclining it to evil. They became subject to ills and to death, were expelled from paradise and condemned to hard labor. The woman was placed under the dominion of man; the earth and the brute creation were permitted to harm man, and the devil was permitted to tempt man to sin, and even to harm him in his person and temporal possessions, when God allows him to do so.

The punishments decreed for sin were salutary for mankind. Illness, death, necessity of labor, and the dependence of men on each other were intended to suppress pride and sensuality. The expulsion of our first parents from paradise was decreed for the reason that they might not eat of the tree of the fruit of life and thus become immortal and remain in their miserable condition for all eternity.

Immediately after our first parents' fall God in His mercy announced to them the coming of a future Redeemer. For this is the meaning of His words to the serpent: "I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed: she shall crush thy head." (*Gen. iii. 15.*) This Redeemer, Jesus Christ, and His mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary, are alone exempt from original sin.

OBJECTIONS

1. *The biblical story of the fall of Adam and Eve is a parable: a serpent can not speak.*

True, a serpent can not speak; but the devil can speak, and take the form of a serpent, or use it as his instrument. "To him who rejects the doctrine of original sin the history of mankind will always remain an unfathomable mystery. He that accepts it alone understands himself and the history of mankind." (*Ketteler.*) Because they can not refute it, unbelievers call the doctrine of original sin a myth, and must there-

fore, to be logical, reject also Christ and redemption by Him, and, indeed, the whole doctrine of Christian revelation.

2. *To common sense it appears unjust that the sin of Adam should be transmitted and imputed to all his posterity.*

Children born in bondage or slavery are bondsmen or slaves not through their own fault, but because their parents are such; they inherit their parents' condition. Our proto-parents rebelled against God: in punishment for their sin they lost sanctifying grace for themselves and all their descendants: therefore all their descendants also incurred the punishment, for they are born in the slavery of sin. And therein consists original sin. St. Augustine writes: "Because we were one and the same with our proto-parent when he committed the sin, we committed it in him in whom we were contained and without whom we would not exist."

Example

THE LOST PARADISE

A poor laborer was obliged to gain a livelihood for himself and his wife as a wood-chopper in the forest of a prince. One day the prince found him at work, panting hard at every stroke of his ax. He asked him what he meant by breathing so hard. The man replied: "My lord, do you not know it? It is the old Adam in me. If he had not sinned, I certainly should not be

obliged to work so hard. Often I thought, and mentioned it also to my wife, how it was possible for Adam and Eve to have been so foolish as to disobey so easy a command? I and my wife should certainly not have been so silly as to bring such great misery upon the world." "Well, then, we shall see," answered the prince. "You have served me faithfully upward of twenty years. I will reward you. Henceforth your toilsome days shall cease. You and your wife shall live in my castle, and as long as you obey me you shall want nothing. You shall live with me as peacefully, quietly, and happy as Adam and Eve in paradise. Now go and tell your wife." And the prince departed. The poor laborer was greatly surprised at his good fortune, and scarcely able to control himself for joy, he hastened to bring the glad tidings to his wife.

The good woman was no less happy than her husband at the prospect of their bright future. Next morning they donned their Sunday garb and started with great expectations for the prince's palace. He received them pleasantly, made them dwell in rooms prepared for them in the palace, and dine at his own table. The poor couple felt happy indeed. Labor and sweat, tribulations and want, toil and care were over; they had everything their hearts craved.

But the day of probation came. On a great feast day the table bore the choicest viands, and in their midst stood a large, covered bowl. Point-

ing to it, the prince said to his guests: "You may eat of everything on the table; but you may not touch the covered bowl there, much less uncover it, before I return. If you dare to do so, your happy days shall be ended." And he left the room.

The poor couple sat surprised, awaiting the prince's return. But he came not. At length they could bear the suspense no longer. What did the bowl contain? Finally the wife said to her husband: "Would there be any harm, do you think, if I should lift the cover but the least bit and peep in?" "Don't do it!" warned her husband. But the new Eve could not control herself any longer, and curiosity also got the better of her husband, so that he did not prevent her when she raised the lid off the bowl. And behold, a little bird flew out of it, and before they had recovered from their surprise, it escaped through the open window. At the same moment the prince entered the dining-room, and seeing the cover raised from the bowl, reproved them sternly, telling them that they were no more worthy of paradise than Adam and Eve had been. Their probation had been a similar one, and they should therefore also experience the same punishment. They ought in future not accuse them of weakness, but go and again earn their bread in the sweat of their brow. Abashed and silent, the unfortunate couple left their paradise and returned, sadder and wiser, to their poor hut.

CHAPTER V

Good and Evil Spirits

THE Almighty Creator of the world, besides His own immediate agency in conserving, governing and directing mundane affairs, appointed also subordinate powers to accomplish His designs concerning His creation. Thereby each creature attains its purpose according to the nature and faculties with which it is endowed, and the world at large acquires order and beauty. Inanimate nature is an example thereof: one being is supported, influenced and sustained by another. In plants the blossoms are sustained by the twigs, the twigs by the branches, the branches by the trunk, the trunk by the roots, and the roots by the earth, whence the whole derives life, growth, and perfection. In the brute creation the animals are divided into kinds and species. In human society ages and conditions, families and communities, states and nations unite themselves into an harmonious whole to supply the common wants of the individual. The plant world is on a higher level than the inanimate world; the animal world surpasses the plant world; man stands high above the brute creation, and still on a higher plane stands the spirit world, to which God gave certain powers over His other creatures. St. Augustine writes: "Though we do not see

angelic apparitions, yet we know by faith that there are angels, and that they have appeared to many. For this we have the testimony of Holy Scripture, and hence we may not doubt it."

The angels are pure spirits, incorporeal beings, endowed with intellect and will, who are capable of assuming a visible form. God created them for His glory and service, and also for their own happiness. The angels were created neither before nor after, but *together* with the visible world. "In the beginning God created heaven and earth." Hence there was no creature in existence before heaven and earth, but within the term "heaven" the holy Fathers comprise also the angels. The Fourth Council of Lateran says: "One is the principle of all things, the Creator of the visible and invisible, the spiritual and corporeal things, who in His almighty power created, at the same time, both kinds of creatures, the spiritual and the corporeal, the angelic and the material, and then the human creature, which consists of both spirit and body." (Ch. IV.)

The angels glorify God. Because, of all creatures, they are the most like unto God, they are the most perfect images of His greatness. In heaven they glorify God by their everlasting hymns of praise. The angels serve God. They are ministering spirits, and what their name implies, *messengers* of God. He uses them to help man attain salvation. Therefore He gave each person a *guardian angel*. "Are they not all min-

istering spirits, sent to minister for them who shall receive the inheritance of salvation?" (*Heb. i. 14.*)

God created all the angels good and holy. They were happy; they were endowed with excellent gifts, amongst which was a superior intellect, by which they were enabled to know God in His works far better than human beings. Their will inclined to the love of God and to the fulfillment of His will. Besides these natural gifts, the angels, at their creation, received also supernatural ones. They were created in the state of sanctifying grace, whereby they became the children and favorites of God, invested with every virtue and with the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

The happiness of the angels, after their creation, was complete, yet they had not attained the supreme bliss of beholding God face to face and of being confirmed in His possession. Like man, they were to attain this happiness as a reward for their perseverance in justice. But Lucifer, one of the highest angels, and with him a great number of others, rebelled against God and refused to obey Him. In punishment for this grievous sin they were condemned to hell for all eternity. The fallen angels are called devils, evil spirits, satan, demons.

A part only of the angels rebelled against God; the rest remained faithful to Him and humbly submitted to His will. When Lucifer and the other fallen angels rebelled against God, the good

angels engaged in combat with them for God's honor. As a reward they were admitted to the beatific vision and possession of God for all eternity, and now praise, glorify, and thank Him forever.

The bad angels, the devils, were condemned to everlasting hell. They are enemies of God and man. They hate man because they see God's image in his soul. They hate us all the more intensely if we by innocence and virtue become, or endeavor to become, more and more like unto God. The devils also envy us for the innumerable benefits conferred upon us by God, and because we are destined for the places in heaven which they lost. This hatred and envy incites the evil spirits to plot continually against our welfare. The devil, in the shape of a serpent, tempted Eve to sin in paradise, and, as we shall hear later on, tempted even the Son of God Himself. With God's permission he may even work harm to our property, health, and life.

The devil may *tempt* us; he may fill our mind with evil thoughts and desires, but he can not *compel* us to commit sin. In temptation we are and remain free agents, and with God's help can overcome the assaults of hell. Therefore we should watch and pray, and resolutely resist every temptation to evil at the very beginning. God moreover does not permit us to be tempted beyond our strength.

OBJECTIONS

1. *We do not see the angels: how do we know that they exist?*

There are many things that we do not see, and yet we know that they exist. We can not see the human intellect, and yet nobody is willing to admit that he has none. In our day there is nobody living who saw Washington, the first President of the United States, and yet nobody doubts his existence. There are many facts of which we become convinced only by the testimony of others. The same is true concerning the existence of the angels: we depend on the testimony of others; but we have it, and have it in a most positive manner. We have the testimony of God Himself for the existence of pure spirits—angels—who enjoy eternal happiness in a state of perfection through His beatific vision.

2. *The idea of a guardian angel is beautiful and poetic, and may be useful as regards children; but adults have no need of a guardian spirit.*

In confirmation of the doctrine of guardian angels St. Paul writes: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent to minister for them who shall receive the inheritance of salvation?" (*Heb. i. 14*) These guardian spirits protect not only children. Adults, too, need their guidance, for they are exposed to greater dangers of soul and body; therefore God in His great goodness provided a guardian angel for every person born into this world to guide him till death. If any

one experiences little or nothing of his care, it is because he heeds not the voice of his heavenly protector.

3. *The doctrine of the devil and his influence on man is contrary to the doctrine of God's wisdom and goodness.*

We must, above all, remember that the evil spirits can harm man only so far as God permits them. They have no power over man's will, who is fully free to consent to the temptation or not. According to St. Augustine, the devil is like a chained dog: it may bark, but can bite only those that approach near enough. Moreover, the assaults of the devil may become for us the means of gaining merit and attaining heaven. Merit is gained by victory over temptation, and victory is obtained by resisting it.

The Church of Christ achieved her most glorious triumphs by her continuous victories over the powers of darkness and their human allies. In the tyranny with which the devil enslaves individuals and nations the liberty and blessings of the Christian religion are shown so much the clearer.

Again, God's goodness and wisdom appear signally in the fact that despite the efforts of the devil and his emissaries, He causes good to spring from evil.

Finally, God surrounded man with so many and so powerful preservatives against the attacks of the evil spirits that every child may say with

St. Teresa, "I fear the devil no more than I do a fly." The temptations and sufferings caused by the devil may be either probations or punishments: in either way man may turn them to account in the work of his salvation. If they are probations, he may thereby gain merit; if they are punishments, he may suffer them in the spirit of penance for his sins. In either case God's wisdom and goodness are apparent.

4. *The doctrine of good and evil spirits favors Spiritism: yet Spiritism is condemned by the Church.*

Spiritism is the invocation of spirits for the purpose of finding out secrets. As a rule, it is fraudulent and immoral. "Yet God, in His just judgment, permits that they who attempt to be informed about secrets by the spirits have many wonderful experiences, whereby they become still more inquisitive and are confirmed in their error." (St. Augustine.) But these experiences are brought about by the evil spirits, and never by the ministry of the angels. Concerning the revelation of secrets, Cardinal Bona says, "The angels do not abet curiosity by revealing secrets."

The Church judges of Spiritism and kindred manifestations as follows:

1. Some of the so-called facts of Spiritism may be ascribed to fraud, others can be explained by mere natural causes, such as hypnotic influence, or some hitherto unexplored natural force in man. But over and above this there are facts

which seem to have the appearance of preternatural manifestations.

2. If preternatural manifestations occur, they must be ascribed to the agency of the devil, for God and His angels do not assist in promoting morbid curiosity, fraud or immorality, to which Spiritism frequently leads.

3. Spiritism is *dangerous* and *immoral*. It is a danger to the Faith, because it denies the doctrines of the Christian religion and declares that Christ is not the Son of God, but merely one of the highest spirits. Spiritism is immoral, because it has no worship of God, and no eternal reward and punishment to safeguard morality. It declares that human existence is merely a time of trial for spirits until they reach the final perfection which is the destiny of all. Surely such a doctrine is not calculated to curb the evil passions of man.

4. Spiritism is in itself evil and forbidden, because the Spiritists assemble for the purpose of interviewing the spirits and obtaining information from them. The souls of the departed that are with God can not communicate with them for this purpose, because it is not conformable with their present state of existence. Hence there remains only the intercourse with the evil spirits and with the souls of the reprobate, which is in itself sinful.

The Church, then, does not favor Spiritism, but condemns it, and rightly warns her children

against it as an irreligious and immoral superstition, and punishes its adherents with refusal of the sacraments.

Examples

WHO CREATED THE DEVIL?

A catechist asked the children: "Who created the angels?" The answer was easy: "God," cried the chorus of youthful voices. Then the catechist asked: "Who created the devil?" No answer. "Did God create the devil?" the catechist continued. "I think not," replied a bashful child. Now another rises, to indicate that he knows the answer. "Well, then," encourages the catechist, "let us hear." The child confidently answered: "God created the angels, but a great number of them turned themselves into devils by their pride." And the answer was correct.

SAVED BY THE GUARDIAN ANGEL

Instances of the guardian angels' protection of children's lives are innumerable. The following is one: In Switzerland a father, in company with other laborers, was felling a tree. His little boy, four years old, came to the place unbeknown to his father and stood in the very spot to which the already falling tree inclined. Too late the father saw him—the tree fell and completely covered the boy. The workmen hastened to remove the branches—and behold, the child stood unharmed. That morning, when his mother, on account of

pressing duties, had wished to shorten the morning prayers, the boy had remarked: "Mother, let me add the prayer to the guardian angel."

THE VISIBLE ANGEL

It is related in the life of St. Frances of Rome: Day and night an angel appeared visibly in her company and helped her to repel the assaults of the devil. He warned her against the dangers of sin and punished her whenever she committed a fault. One day the saint omitted to interrupt an idle conversation which was held in her presence. In due time she felt the angel's punishment. On another occasion she was reluctant to respond to her confessor's inquiries concerning the heavenly favors she received, because, in her humility, she deemed herself unworthy of them. Her angel reprimanded her severely.



THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

*As seed falling on good ground brings forth fruit, so may
Thy grace, dear Lord, produce fruit in my soul.*

CHAPTER VI

Revelation

FOR the attainment of the end for which man was created the mere knowledge of God's existence is insufficient. Hence St. Thomas Aquinas observes: "It was necessary that man should be instructed by God Himself even in those things which he was able to ascertain by means of his natural intellect, because the true knowledge of God by means of purely intellectual research is attained only by few, after long study, and is mixed with many errors; and yet the salvation of mankind, which comes from God alone, depends on the attainment of this truth." This instruction of man by God is called *divine revelation*.

By revelation in general is meant the communication of unknown truth. If God is the author of such communication it is called *divine* revelation; and if, besides, religious truth is its subject, it is religious revelation. The unknown religious truth which is the subject of religious revelation may be a supernatural or it may be a natural truth, because human intellect, by reason of sin, understands natural truth very imperfectly. Supernatural revelation made by God Himself without the intervention of others is *immediate*, such as was accorded, for instance, to the proph-

ets and apostles. For those who are dependent on others for its knowledge, it is *mediate*. Finally, revelation is *general* or *private*, according as it is intended for all mankind or for certain individuals.

Possessing this direct revelation, we easily recognize how aptly its truths are demonstrated by nature and reason. Without it our knowledge of God and of our eternal destiny would be obscure and defective, rather conjecture and speculation than conviction.

In reality, mankind was never in this latter condition, for even the truth-seeking philosophers of pre-Christian times were not entirely without some rays of light glimmering through the darkness of ages as a remnant of original revelation. More or less, fragments of God's revelation to our first parents are found amongst all races, and became known, after the election of the Jewish nation and the revelation made to it, to the pagans through their intercourse with the Israelites. The pagan philosophers, Aristotle and Plato, who lived long before Christ, declared that the doctrine of the existence of God was "an ancient, sacred tradition, a remnant of the lost ancient wisdom that is rightly held to be divine revelation."

Just as there is no barbarous condition that did not originate in a lost civilization, thus also polytheism is only the result of error, and every nation professing it at one time worshiped the

true God, as history proves. The traditions of original revelation relating to the heavenly spirits or angels may have caused their being regarded as minor deities; thence the transition to the worship of the forces of nature, of animals, and finally of images made by hand, was easy.

But grievously as mankind erred, even in the lowest stage of idolatry, it never lost the consciousness of guilt. Its belief in eternal retribution, its desire and yearning to be reconciled with the Deity remained. Man never lost the consciousness of the worship and gratitude due to God, of the need and the privilege of addressing petitions to Him. In pre-Christian times we see mankind, banished from God through its own fault, sinking lower and lower, yet struggling and striving, supported by the few remnants of original revelation, and by the reasoning, the desire and yearning of its own mind for renewed revelation. The traditions of every nation are expressions of the hope of receiving instruction either by God directly or through His messenger.

Still clearer and more forcibly this yearning appears in those men who made it their life's purpose to answer the questions concerning God's being and man's object and destiny. "Man must do only what is pleasing to God," says Pythagoras; "but he will not know what it is, except God or a higher genius instruct and a divine light illuminate him." And Socrates writes: "If there be no secure way, no revelation that becomes to

us a vessel that fears no storms, we are compelled to make the stormy passage of life on the wreck of truth."

That this universal belief of mankind should be a deception is impossible. It springs from the direst need of the mind; it points to an original revelation made to the world of which the recollection, though distorted and half forgotten, was never entirely lost.

This is the condition in which we find the ancient nations. But no, not all of them; there is one exception. One nation received what all mankind yearned for—a renewed divine revelation, one that solves all difficulties and brings consolation and peace. *God spoke to man.* "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets: last of all in these days has spoken to us by His Son." (*Heb. i. 1, 2.*)

The rays of divine light received by this one people radiated throughout the whole world, strengthening the still existing remnants of truth and reviving the hope still living in the hearts. The nations looked toward the East, and their wise men confessed that they owed a great part of their knowledge to the tidings that came to them from Israel. Thus the desire for a Saviour and Deliverer increased. And it was not accidentally that the rays of light illuminated the nations. God spoke to *one* nation, because the time of deliverance had not yet arrived, the

slavery enthralling mankind was not yet lifted; but mercifully and compassionately, though indirectly, consolation came: by the revelation made to one nation all mankind was prepared for the Redeemer. We say *all mankind*, because not alone the nations before Christ, but all yet to come, were prepared by the revelation made to the Jews for the firm belief in the Redeemer.

By divine inspiration Moses wrote the history of creation, then that of mankind in general and of his people in particular. This history alone solves the difficulties of the world's creation, and the very fact that it is the only solution proves that it is the true one. It is both a necessity and a duty that the human mind investigate whether God, when in the course of time His first revelation had become obscure and distorted, revealed Himself anew. And if the result of this investigation is that a renewed divine revelation undoubtedly exists, what can man do but gratefully and joyfully accept it?

But how had Moses come to the true knowledge of the events related by him in his history of the creation? Tradition can not be the source whence he drew, because man appeared on earth only after the events related. It is equally improbable that he was acquainted with those processes which science discovered thousands of years after him. What remains, then, but the conclusion that divine revelation is the source of his knowledge?

Moses was not the only inspired writer. God called other men to write, by special inspiration, many of the truths which He had revealed. The books written by these men are called the *Holy Scripture*. Holy Scripture contains much of that revealed by God; hence it was preserved by the Church with the greatest care. The truths not contained in Holy Scripture were preached by the apostles. From them the Church received them, and treasuring them carefully, transmitted them from generation to generation as a sacred heritage. These revelations are called *tradition*. We have, therefore, *two* sources of divine revelation, *viz.*, *Holy Scripture*, also called the Bible, and *tradition*.

Holy Scripture is divided into the books of the Old Testament, which is also called the Old Law, because it relates to the law given to mankind *before* Christ. The books written *after* Christ are called the New Testament, or the New Law, because they relate to the law given by Christ for man's salvation.

By tradition we mean those revealed truths that were *preached* by the apostles, but not *written* by them. This, however, does *not* mean that these doctrines were not written later on; it only intends to convey that they were not *written* by the *apostles*, but announced orally by them. Tradition, then, is the *unwritten* Word of God, Holy Scripture is the *written* Word of God.

Consequently, being obliged to believe *all* that

was revealed by God, we may not content ourselves with believing only that which is contained in Holy Scripture, but must accept as divine revelation also that which is transmitted to us by tradition. But even Holy Scripture and tradition do not suffice to instruct us in all things that we must necessarily believe. There must be an *authority* which tells us what books belong to Holy Scripture, and how we are to understand its many difficult passages; because otherwise we should be exposed to the greatest danger of error. For this purpose, as shall be explained later on, God instituted His Holy Church and sent her the Holy Ghost as infallible Guide. Enlightened and directed by the Holy Ghost, the Church is commissioned to deliver to us the contents of divine revelation and to explain them, so that we are protected against all danger of error. Hence to be a Catholic Christian we must believe everything revealed by God and proposed as such to us by the authority of the Church.

OBJECTIONS

1. *I believe in God: everything else is human invention.*

To profess to believe in God, that is, to believe that God exists, and to reject revelation means either of the following: (1) That God has not revealed Himself to man; or (2) that He revealed only His existence, and not the truths resulting therefrom; or (3) that He did not impose on man the duty of accepting His revelation.

To be logical in the rejection of the revelation of God's great manifestations of His omnipotence in the salvation of mankind, we must also reject everything proposed to our belief concerning Him and His acts: the prophecies and the expectation of a Messiah during four thousand years; the incarnation of the Son of God, His life, doctrine, virtues, and miracles; we must regard as victims of deception the millions who believed these truths and willingly shed their blood in testimony of their faith; finally, we must admit that the civilization of nations, fraternal charity, purity of morals, heroic sanctity originated in a gigantic fraud, the like of which the world had never seen before and shall never see again.

To claim that God does not impose upon man the duty of accepting His revelation is a still greater absurdity. If the Son of God really became man, lived and taught and founded a Church on earth, it is obvious that He demands of us to belong to that Church—for else why should He have founded it?

Belief in God—faith—logically demands belief in His revelation; therefore belief in the God-man Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God, in His doctrine and institutions. We must believe in the Church He founded, in the sacraments He instituted; we must obey the precepts He gave and the Church He founded. This is the logical consequence of our belief in the divinity of Christ, in

His revelation and in the divine character of His institutions. Hence they who profess to reject "everything else" beyond the belief in the existence of God have no reason to boast of their faith; for if they do not believe in "everything else" it is manifest that they really believe nothing.

2. *According to Scripture, God spoke to man: how is this possible, God being a spirit?*

Is it impossible that God, who gave the power of speech to man, should converse with him, if such be His pleasure? Whether this conversation, that is, revelation, be necessary is for God to judge, not for man. But if He reveals Himself to us, if He gives us other laws besides those of nature, it is our duty to obey. Whether God, in communicating with man, uses human speech or not makes no difference. To deny the possibility of such communication is to deny God's omnipotence.

3. *Holy Scripture's description of creation contradicts in many ways the results of modern research.*

The Scriptural description of creation does not necessarily mean that the events related were accomplished within six days of twenty-four hours. We may accept periods of millions of years without conflicting with this narrative. Concerning the succession of events as related by Moses, their harmony with the researches of natural science proves their correctness. This narrative proves

correct even where, at a first glance, it seems improbable; for instance, when it relates the creation of light on the first day, and mentions the creation of the sun, moon and stars on the fourth day.

4. *I believe in Holy Scripture: the rest is human addition.*

You do *not* believe in Holy Scripture; for it says nowhere that all the articles of faith are contained therein; but it says in more than one passage that it does *not* contain everything we are bound to believe. Thus St. John says at the close of his gospel: "But there are also many other things which Jesus did: which, if they were written every one, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books that should be written." (*John* xxi. 25.)

5. *Tradition is not mentioned in Holy Scripture; on the contrary, it says: "For what things soever were written, were written for our learning." (Rom. xv. 4.)*

Nevertheless, St. Paul exhorts the first Christians that they should "stand fast, and hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by word or by our epistle." (*2 Thess.* ii. 24.) And to St. Timothy he writes: "The things which thou hast heard of me by many witnesses, the same commend to faithful men, who shall be fit to teach others also." (*2 Tim.* ii. 2.)

6. *The Catholic Church prohibits the reading of the Bible.*

This assertion is false. Every Catholic may read the Holy Scripture or Bible, provided he uses an edition with explanations approved by ecclesiastical authority. Professor Kropatscheck of Breslau truthfully writes in the periodical "The Reformation" of November 19, 1905: "It has long been known to the historian that the so-called prohibition of Bible reading in the Middle Ages belongs to legendary lore, and is now found only in works intended to foster prejudice."

Examples

A LETTER FROM GOD TO MAN

To St. Anthony, the holy hermit, who had become so famous for his austere life in the desert that a number of disciples placed themselves under his direction, the Emperor Constantine once sent a special messenger with letters. The saint's disciples were greatly rejoiced at this signal favor received by their master. But Anthony put aside the letters without reading them. The disciples urged him to read and answer them, reminding him that the emperor would feel slighted at his seeming neglect. The saint replied: "Why are you surprised because the emperor writes to me, when he is only a man? How much more astonished ought we to be that God, the supreme Lord of heaven and earth, the King of kings, gave us the Holy Scriptures, which are, so to say, His letter to us. How guilty we must appear

before Him if we despise this, His letter, neglect to read it and much less observe its contents." Then he read the emperor's letters and answered them kindly and in the manner most salutary for the emperor.

DEFENDERS OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

When Felix, the bishop of Tibiura, was threatened with death unless he delivered up the Holy Scriptures to the pagan governor, he replied: "It is better that the flames consume me than the Scriptures."

When the deacon Euplus was asked by a heathen judge why he did not obey the emperor and deliver up the Holy Scriptures, he answered: "Because I am a Christian and am not permitted to do so. The Holy Scriptures contain the eternal life, and whosoever betrays them forfeits it."

THE ADVERSARY OF TRADITION

A priest relates: I once found myself in company with a zealous adversary of tradition. The conversation soon turned to that subject, and I asked: "Do you believe in the Bible?" He replied: "Certainly I do. But what has the Bible to do with tradition?" I rejoined: "Give me a Bible, and I shall prove to you the close relation of the one to the other." He handed me a Bible. I turned over a few pages, and handing it back to him, said: "I want a Bible; prove to me that this book is one. How do you know that this is

a Bible?" He promptly replied: "How do I know it? I know it by the testimony of our ancestors, who for centuries regarded this book as the depository of divine revelation." And I said: "So you then really accept tradition, despite your zealous opposition to it!"

CHAPTER VII

Religion

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS defines religion as "the relation of the rational being to God, his Creator and last end." Hence there are certain premises without which this definition is impossible. First, it presupposes the existence of God and of a rational being; secondly, it presumes that there is a difference between the two, because without it the relation to or connection with one another is impossible.

As appears from what we have hitherto considered, the belief in God, hence also religion, originated as follows: By creation God placed man in relation with Him as with His Creator, and at the same time, by endowing him with reason, gave him the faculty of recognizing this relation. The ultimate source of religion, then, is God; its mediate source is man's nature.

Religion is developed in man's nature like the blossom from the plant. Proof of this assertion is the existence of religion amongst all nations from their very beginning. The latest researches prove that races, tribes, and nations without any religious ideas whatsoever do not exist.

Religion is, above all, a moral necessity. It is a duty of the individual and of the community. This duty is founded:

1. *On our relation to God.* God, man's Creator and end, demands that man, and mankind in general, recognize His existence. Hence it is man's and mankind's duty to learn to understand their relation to God and to act accordingly.

2. *On the end of man's creation.* Man can attain the purpose of his creation and his final happiness only by the interior perfection resulting from religion. Religion promotes his knowledge and ultimately perfects it. It influences his will and with divine authority leads it to true virtue. A morality founded not on God, but on reason alone, results in self-interest and gratification of the passions. Religion alone creates true virtue, and thereby true happiness in this world and in the world to come.

3. *On the welfare of society.* Religion alone is the foundation of a sound and firmly established public life. By it law is regulated according to the will of God, and by thus acknowledging God's will as supreme, it sanctions it with highest authority.

Religion being the expression of man's relation to God, it is divided into *natural* and *supernatural*. Natural religion consists in merely knowing God by means of His works of creation. It is a merely natural virtue, and the union with God, together with the happiness attained thereby, is as perfect as it is possible to achieve by merely natural powers, merely natural knowledge and love of God.

Supernatural religion, in conformity with its definition, leads to a supernatural end, to one raised high above all the faculties, demands, and needs of the creature. Hence it, moreover, includes the means leading to this end., *viz.*, to a supernatural knowledge based upon supernatural revelation. Its ultimate aim is the supernatural union with God, and supernatural happiness through supernatural knowledge (beatific vision) and love of God.

To religion necessarily belongs *cult*, or the manifestation, external and internal, of worship. The expressions of cult are mainly: 1. Prayer; 2. Sacred symbols; 3. Sacrifice.

1. *Prayer*, in general, and when viewed according to its definition as the "elevation of the soul to God," may be regarded as the expression of all religious sentiment. It is a special act of religious cult, when it is offered publicly in a sacred place, at certain times, and by specially appointed persons (priests). In the latter case it generally has a specified (liturgical) form, especially when it takes the form of chant; it is joined, moreover, with certain ceremonies, such as processions, genuflections, etc.

2. In this case it approaches the religious *symbol*, which is intended to raise man's soul to God. Such symbols are the sacred vestments, incense, candles, etc. In Christian worship the symbol is generally a sacrament or a sacramental, which operates the grace or blessing signified by it.

3. *Sacrifice* is the supreme act of cult, the highest expression of divine worship. As a fact, it appears so universally among mankind as does religion, prayer, and symbolism, and as these latter manifest themselves as inherent in human nature, thus also does sacrifice.

On what religious idea is sacrifice based? Man is destined and feels himself impelled to give himself entirely to God. As an expression of this feeling he offers something that relates as closely as possible to himself, and is capable of representing him in the most direct manner. It is his intention thereby to acknowledge and worship God as his Creator and Lord. The most forcible way of manifesting this intention would be to sacrifice himself, his life, to God. This sacrifice of life appears the more appropriate because he acknowledges himself as a sinner who has, for this very reason, forfeited his life. By thus sacrificing his life for God he would acknowledge Him as the Lord of life and death, as his Creator and the end of his whole being; he would confess himself a sinner deserving of death, but repenting of his crimes. Whereas, however, he is not the master of his life, he replaces his person by something belonging to him, by whose "annihilation" he expresses this idea. He could best do so by sacrificing, in his stead, another human life, especially that of a beloved child, a method actually adopted by many savage nations. But as this also is forbidden, he has recourse to the brute creation

for a representative of his idea. Other offerings, also, may serve for this purpose, although they do not express the idea so fully as the brute victim.

The very first pages of the history of mankind mention sacrifice. The sons of our first parents, Cain and Abel, offered sacrifice; Noah erected an altar for sacrifice; Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the patriarchs of Israel, offered sacrifice. God Himself, through Moses, regulated the sacrificial order to be observed by His chosen people. Three kinds of sacrifice were ordained: The holocaust, the peace offering, and the propitiatory sacrifice. All three had the fourfold purpose: to worship God as the supreme Lord; to thank Him for His benefits; to implore of Him new favors, and to expiate the offenses committed against Him. This latter purpose was signally expressed in propitiatory sacrifice. Because the offense had to be atoned for before man was worthy to appear before God, this sacrifice preceded the others, when they were offered up jointly. In the holocaust the whole victim was consumed by fire; in the peace offering it served as food for the priests and the offerers, was a food offering. To these bloody sacrifices were added unbloody ones, consisting of gifts of flour, oil, and incense.

In this manner sacrifice had been regulated amongst that part of the human race which had been elected as the special bearer of divine revelation. Though the rest of the nations had strayed in many ways from the truth, yet they all retained

sacrifice either as a remnant of the original revelation or as a result attained by reasoning concerning man's relation to God. The ancient Egyptians, Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Indians, Mexicans, Chinese, etc., had sacrifices, and even the barbarous nations of to-day have them.

But what is the attitude of Christianity toward sacrifice? Was it to cease when the preparatory religion of Judaism was succeeded by the religion of promise? By no means! Even as religion itself was not to cease after the introduction of Christianity, thus also the highest and most perfect expression of religious cult—sacrifice—was not to cease. Sacrifice is rather the basis of Christianity: the bloody sacrifice of the cross and its unbloody renewal in the Holy Mass. The Church surrounded this sacrifice, left to her by Christ, since the earliest ages with most appropriate rites. In the course of time she approved a number of liturgies, which celebrate the sacrifice of the New Law in various languages. Even at the present time the Catholic Church comprises, besides the Latin, the Greek, Syrian, Chaldaic, Coptic, and Slavonian liturgies.

We shall treat more at length on the sacrifice of the Mass in a later article.

Having considered religion in its relation to God, it remains for us to show that it is necessary: 1. For man individually, in order to render him moral and happy; 2. For man as a member of society.

From the following it is evident that religion is essential to morality:

God is the source of the moral order called natural law. This law emanates from God's will, who imposes on us the duty of observing it. It demonstrates to us that the attainment of an infinite good is conditioned on the performance of a certain act: we are bound to perform a certain action the omission of which is an infinite evil.

Religion is necessary for man's perfection and happiness:

1. *In the present life.* When man directs his mental faculties to things divine and makes them the object of his meditation and research, he occupies himself with the infinite, with the origin and aim of everything existing—that is, with God, in whom alone human intellect finds rest, in whom alone supreme satisfaction and consummation of human knowledge can be attained.

2. Our will and ideas, when directed toward heavenly things, are thereby ennobled, elevated above the various trivial aspirations of earth and incited to the performance of great actions. The most beautiful specimens of art, the grandest achievements for the benefit of mankind originated in the religious mind.

3. Without religion man is the feeblest being in all creation. He is compelled to submit to the impulse of a constraining force called nature, and can not find the aid or consolation of a living Providence. A suicide acts but logically when he

terminates a life which, without God and the hope of a future existence, is without value and truly insupportable. In suffering, that inevitable lot of all mankind, religion alone is the secure prop, it alone gives consolation and perseverance to man. When everything in and about us begins to totter, religion alone is our sure support, the immutable polar star shining above earthly instability. The belief in a future life alone enables us to reconcile the discord existing here below between morality and happiness. Even as man is compelled to strive for the attainment of happiness, religion is necessary for him.

Without religion the existence of human society is impossible. It is man's destiny to be a member of the family in which he was born and of society at large. He is drawn by necessity and by choice into the family and social circle and kept therein.

A family without religion is not only not a due representative of human society, but will also not, as a rule, endure. Only when husband and wife love each other in God and for His sake will their association outlive their natural inclination and strengthen them to mutual sacrifices in times of trial. If the Fourth Commandment does not induce parents and children to the scrupulous fulfillment of their duties, experience teaches that in most cases the family will not rise above a collection of brutes.

Moral, if not natural, necessity obliges man to

live in civil society. The latter, however, is impossible without due authority. But authority derives its source from God, hence true submission is produced only by religion. Therefore religion is the foundation of the state, and true statesmen have always regarded it as of paramount importance. Their most frequent mistake regarding religion was that they tried to use it for their politic purposes. Not content that religion produced conscientious citizens and obedient subjects, they tried to make it do police duty. Rulers who did damage to religion had reason in each instance to deplore its decay, because the interests of the state suffered thereby. Periods of civic greatness always were periods of religious progress, and the ruin of religious sentiment and of morals always preceded or went hand in hand with the decay of nations. Hence we may truly say of religion what is said of justice, which can not exist without religion: "It is the foundation of the state."

Even human intercourse, which, in consequence of the increase of population and of commercial relations, becomes more and more complicated every day, has need of religion for its regulation. Mere sentiments of duty, justice, charity, etc., restrain few men from deceit, theft, corrupt practices, etc.; most of these crimes are committed in secret and are therefore not prevented by a sense of honor or by the fear of punishment. The consciousness of a supreme Judge

who sees in secret alone is able, under all circumstances, to be the motive for a conscientious fulfillment of duty.

If, then, as was shown above, religion is an essential element of our relation to God and man; if without it no true worship of God, no well-ordered society, no human intercourse, welfare and happiness are possible, it must be regarded requisite in man.

OBJECTIONS

1. *Late discoveries prove that there are savage races who have no religion.*

The universality of the belief in the existence of a Deity in antiquity was not discredited, but rather confirmed, by the discovery of savage races in our days. "The assertion that there are races or tribes having no religion is the result either of limited observation or of wrong conception. No tribe or race was hitherto found without the belief in a Supreme Being, and travelers who asserted this were refuted later on. Hence it is quite permissible to say that religion, in the general acceptation of the term, is a conception common to all men." (*Tiele.*) "The question whether anywhere on earth there was found a race without religious ideas may confidently be answered in the negative." (*Peschel.*) "Formerly it caused surprise that the colored race should possess anything like morality or religion. We learned to judge differently, thanks especially to the mis-

sionaries who spent their whole lives among the savages, learned their languages, won their confidence, and even if they had their prejudices, as a whole had a true estimate of the savages. We can not now assert with truth that, despite the most searching investigations, human beings were found anywhere who did not possess something that served them as religion." (*W. Mueller, "Origin and Spread of Religion."*)

2. *If I but act rightly, God will be content: the Creator can not demand more of His creature.*

What is meant by the expression "to act rightly"? People using it obviously mean to say that a righteous life makes all religion superfluous. Righteous life, good morals, a blameless deportment certainly are laudable, but they are not sufficient to make a man truly good. Three things are necessary to a truly good life: Piety toward God, equity toward man and justice toward ourselves. Let us concede for a moment that persons professing this principle do no wrong to their neighbor, or, as they are wont to express themselves, "they do not murder, they do not steal." Let us, moreover, concede that they are not immoral and profligate, that their deportment is unobjectionable. Can they claim to be called good when they neglect so sacred a duty as the worship of God? God commands religion by as many titles as He has attributes: are they good who ignore these titles? God gave us revelation in order to instruct us in religion; in order to

teach it the Son of God became man, confirmed His doctrine by miracles, promised eternal life to those that follow it, and threatened with eternal punishment those who repudiate it—and yet they call themselves good! To entertain such an idea a man must have lost reason together with religion.

3. *The only free agent is the rationalist: he severed the bonds by which religion binds mankind.*

He only deserves the name of rationalist, *i.e.*, thinker, who, by reasoning arrives at the truth: if not, his deductions must rather be called delusions and phantasies than reason. Truth is not produced by man according to his fancy, but exists independently, and can therefore only be accepted or rejected by him. The rejection of truth can never render a man independent or free. Hence the rationalist either repeats phrases which he does not understand or he is an inveterate enemy of truth. Freedom of thought can never be injured by truth, for rational thought aspires to truth. As the existence of God and the deductions resulting therefrom are truths, rational thought can not be suppressed thereby. Rational thought in contradiction to truth is not free, for man must submit to religion. The rationalist desires to reason according to his own manner, but such reasoning is not permissible: no one has a right to remain in error after the truth was demonstrated to him. Man is created for the truth.

Examples**THE PAGAN WOMAN**

Father Salviaterra, a Jesuit missionary, was with a tribe of savages when, one evening two young men unknown to him came and asked him to follow them. They led him to the foot of a high hill and told him to go up. Impelled by some inward influence, the missionary obeyed, and at length came to a poor hut in which a lamp was burning. Entering, he found only a very sick old woman. She told him that she had always lived according to the dictates of her reason and conscience. He instructed her briefly in the essential truths of the Christian religion, and baptized her, whereupon the poor old woman, full of gratitude, breathed forth her soul.

A MIRACULOUS CONVERSION

In the life of the Jesuit missionary, Father Joseph Anchieta, who died, 1597, in the fame of great sanctity, is related the following incident: Father Anchieta was once led by the spirit of God into a bleak desert, far away from his companions, and found there, under a tree where he had laid himself to die, an aged Brazilian. As soon as he saw the priest he cried: "Make haste! I have awaited thee a long time." Drawing near, the missionary asked him who he was and whence he had come. The old man replied that he had been brought in a most mysterious manner from

a far distant shore to this place. Then the good missionary asked what he wanted of him. The old pagan answered: "I am seeking the right way," which means, in the Brazilian manner of speech, that he desired to please God and attain salvation. After some questioning the missionary found that the poor old man had faithfully observed during his whole life the natural law, had lived, despite the pagan custom, with only one wife, had never, except in case of necessity and to defend his life, taken part in war, and moreover had never practised idolatry—in short, that he never had grievously transgressed God's commandments. He was, moreover, for a man of his situation, well versed in the knowledge of natural law and of its supernatural source. When the missionary had instructed him in the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, the old man replied that he had always had some vague idea of all these things, but could not find words to express them. After the priest had baptized him, the old man wept for joy, raised his eyes and hands to heaven and gave thanks, first to his merciful Creator and Redeemer and then to the missionary for the wonderful grace conferred upon him. Thereupon he gave up his soul, just purified by the water of regeneration, into the hands of his Creator.

CHAPTER VIII

The Commandments of God

THE purpose of religion, the relation of man to God, is to lead man to the eternal possession of God, to endless bliss. That we may not go astray on the way to this our end, God Himself designated and unmistakably pointed out the direction. Through religion and revelation He gave us a law that will lead us to our destination. Just as He appointed for the heavenly bodies their course, so that they can not deviate from it without causing ruin to themselves and others; just as He gave laws to the plants without which they can not begin and continue to exist; just as He provided the brute creation with the instinct necessary for its preservation and propagation: thus also He instilled into man a law which he must observe if he wishes to exist and develop as the being for which God intended him.

This law must necessarily be very different from the one that governs the lifeless and the brute creation. These latter must be compelled by the law, bound to its observance by the force of instinct and compulsion, because they have neither reason nor free will. The law for a reasoning and free being must necessarily be one that is recognized by reason and accepted and



THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

*Blessed and praised every moment be the most holy
and divine Sacrament.*

executed by his free will. This law is called *natural law*.

To Moses it was delivered at a later period by God Himself, written in an expressive and decisive form on two tablets, for him to promulgate. Its roots, however, are implanted in our very being, and we can not reject it without rejecting our very nature. This moral law, though in conformity with our reason, is nevertheless repugnant to the disordered desires and inclinations of our sensuality, our heart, because every law necessarily circumscribes our will and converts our liberty from an arbitrary into a free one.

There are times when our heart, inflamed by passion, feels impatience and resentment because of this restriction. It is then inclined to rebel against the law, and harbors the thought, "Why does God forbid what I feel impelled to do? Why has He curtailed my liberty?" And we perhaps imagine that God refuses us what tends to our welfare, that He intends to restrain our liberty. Then we rebel against Him and begin to entertain doubts not only against explicit articles of faith, but also concerning the great truths of reason. We undertake to raise up for us our own moral standard, one ample enough to give room to our passions and evil inclinations.

This is the principal source of all doubts concerning religion and Christianity with all those who were once instructed in its doctrines and

imbued with the truth thereof. They protest against the truth of the *doctrine* because the *commandments* are annexed to it.

Let us now soberly examine the law which God gave to us. As a good father forbids his child whatever is dangerous, even if the latter does not recognize the danger, thus God, who created us in disinterested love, also gave us in disinterested love His moral law. Without obedience to this law man can not prosper and attain happiness, either in time or eternity. Hence the word of Solomon: "Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is all man." (*Ecclus.* xii. 13.)

The fundamental law, the summary of all laws, is contained in the precept: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And the second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (*Matt.* xxii. 27.) The commandments, then, refer to God, to our neighbor, and to ourselves. They are contained in the Decalogue which Moses received from God Himself on Mount Sinai.

The *First Commandment* of God reads: "I am the Lord thy God. . . . Thou shalt not have strange gods before me. Thou shalt not make to thyself a graven thing, nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, nor of those things that are in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not adore them, nor

serve them," (*Ex.* xx. 2-5.) God here confers a great favor upon us by forbidding us to have other gods besides Him. Remember the condition of the nations that practised polytheism. It bound them heart and mind in slavery and superstition; their every movement was inspired and controlled by the fear of evil powers. From this fear God freed mankind by proclaiming Himself as the only God and Lord, whom alone we are to confess, worship, and adore by faith, hope, and charity. By *faith*: God; our Creator, who endowed us with reason, demands of us that we use this reason, that we employ and develop our faculties; but He knows that our reason may be and often is led into error, that it needs divine illumination and instruction. Therefore He demands of us, besides the rightful use of reason, also *faith*; that is, the submission of our reason to Him, the All-Knowing and Truthful One. Faith is the highest and essential worship of God; for as long as we do not believe in Him and His promises we are separated from Him and His supernal illumination; we remain in darkness and death.

God, by demanding faith of us, thereby implies that He will furnish us with truth; that is, with the most essential truths. He did this by means of revelation. The first part of the First Commandment, therefore, instead of being a severe law, is a great boon conferred upon us by God.

We must confess and worship God by *hope*.

The summary of Christian hope is: Use your mind and reason and bodily faculties to the best of your ability, employing the means placed at your disposal by the Creator. But when your power gives out, when your wisdom does not suffice, do not despair, do not lose heart, but trust in God, the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Loving Being. Confide in Him: He loves you better than you can love yourself, and when the difficulties of your task overwhelm you, His omnipotence, wisdom, and love will come to your aid. This certainly is not a difficult commandment.

Finally, we must confess and worship God by *charity*, that is, by loving Him above all things, and by loving, for His sake, all men, without exception, as ourselves, because they, too, are children of God. This charity is the consummation of the justice and holiness demanded of us by God. Hence St. John, the Beloved Disciple, reminds us in the name of his divine Master that whosoever fulfills the commandment of loving God above all things and his fellow-men for His sake as himself has fulfilled the whole law. We must, however, remember one thing: One of the effects of love is that it removes all inequality, it bridges every chasm, elevates the lowly and bows the lofty, thus uniting both. We must remember, moreover, that God not only *permits* us to love Him, but made our love for Him the subject of His first and greatest commandment. He desires our love as human love can be desired. He ex-

hausts the power of speech to express the yearning of His heart: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore have I drawn thee, taking pity on thee." (*Jer. xxxi. 2.*) And because love craves love, He commands, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul." He commands it because He created us in infinite love and for the sole purpose of making us His children, heirs of His kingdom; He created us that He might love us and that we might love Him for all eternity. By His First Commandment He makes us His children, whom He loves, and whom we should love in return as our Father.

This view leads us to understand the *Second Commandment*. If we are God's children, His name is our Father's name, and our own most sacred family name. Confusion and shame on the member of a family who dishonors his name; confusion, shame, yea, a curse on him who outrages his father's name, and who, by perjury and falsehood, makes God the witness of a lie and works damage to his fellow-man. Hence the commandment, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." (*Ex. xx. 7.*)

The *Third Commandment*, "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day" (*Ex. xx. 8*), is manifestly but a proof of God's paternal goodness toward man. After the sin of our first parents God could not permit man to continue in the full enjoyment of the goods of this world and at the

same time in indolence. Remaining idle, man would have fallen into all kinds of crime, and would thereby have lost the character of a child of God. Therefore God sentenced him to hard labor, but not to life-long drudgery, as human society condemns its malefactors. No: God wills that after six days of labor we should devote one day to rest, that our faculties may not become exhausted too speedily by our own or others' covetousness. It is not God's will that we should devote ourselves entirely to the occupations of worldly interest: hence He set aside one day, *His* day, on which His children are commanded to assemble in their Father's house, to hear His word, to meet at His common table. This is meant by the commandment of keeping holy the Sabbath day: it is the remission of the penalty of labor, a token of our Father's goodness.

Thus the first three commandments, relating to God and to God's service, are a manifest proof of how intent He is upon our welfare.

The remainder of the commandments present themselves to us as the conditions of our earthly existence and welfare. In the *Fourth Commandment*, "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thou mayest be long lived upon the land which the Lord thy God will give thee" (*Ex.* xx. 12), we have the fundamental condition on which the human family is based. Man derives his origin from the union of father and mother in the family. To fulfill their parental duties they must

devote their whole life to God and their children. Hence it is the latter's indispensable duty to make due return for their parents' love and devotion, cares and troubles, by filial reverence, obedience, and love. Experience teaches that man is what education has made of him. An undisciplined person can not be prosperous and truly happy in this world: hence a child who does not honor and obey his parents, and who does not submit to their guidance, and thereby transgresses the Commandment of God, will miss both earthly prosperity and eternal bliss.

To the family, ecclesiastical and civil society is as necessary as it is to the individual. Hence the Fourth Commandment comprehends not only our natural, but also our spiritual parents, that is, all legitimate authority in Church and State, thereby comprising the foundation upon which rests our existence and prosperity. It is the condition not only of our being, but also of our growth and advancement; it is the essential requisite of our temporal and spiritual welfare. From it the Christian nations learned their veneration for and obedience to the legitimate ecclesiastical authorities and the duly constituted civil governments as God's representatives, as the bearers of His authority, who is the Author of the natural order as well as of grace and of the things of the supernatural order. Regarded thus, obedience to civil law is truly noble, a supernatural virtue, a shield against self-debasement. To obey God is to rule,

and to obey a legitimate superior for God's sake debases no one, for it is God whom we obey. He alone can render obedience tolerable, albeit mankind can not subsist without it; therefore he alone will be faithful and obedient under all conditions who obeys for God's sake as long as those in authority command as representatives of divine authority, and do not themselves rebel against God.

As God, by the Fourth Commandment, safeguarded the conditions of our existence and welfare, thus, by the *Fifth*, "Thou shalt not kill," He secures to us all the goods which He, as Creator, has intended for our benefit. By this commandment He assures to us life, health, security, welfare of mind and body.

We transgress this commandment by extravagant sensual indulgence, by the excitements of passion, by anger and undue sorrow; in short, by everything that harms us in soul or body. By transgressing this commandment we sin against the most excellent work of God—the human soul and body. Were we to enumerate the various forms of actual murder, we should be obliged to recount secrets of crime, of licentiousness, and of unrestrained brutal sensual indulgence which must, for the sake of Christian decency, remain unmentioned. We find to-day principally two forms of murder calculated to excite us to horror: the voluntary prevention of birth, and suicide. Against the first form of murder both the

natural law and the Gospel protest; nevertheless, certain classes heed neither the arguments of reason nor of conscience that protest against it. Such is the corruption of human nature when sensual indulgence is its only aim. Suicide originates from the same cause: if, after one has indulged himself in every way, the means or pleasures of existence give out, if nothing but debt remains, if a person feels himself abandoned by God and man, he resorts to suicide in order to escape his troubles. Such a person long ago discarded the belief in the immortality of the soul, in a just retribution after death; his moral faculties are benumbed by sinful indulgence: hence the appalling end—self-caused appearance before the seat of Divine Justice.

By the *Sixth Commandment*, "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (*Ex. xx. 14*), God protects human life, man's spiritual and temporal welfare, from that most insidious of enemies—unrestrained lustful indulgence. No age is secure from the attacks of this terrible crime: even early childhood may become its victim. It desecrates the most sacred relations, and causes unutterable misery.

To assure the preservation of our body and soul, it is God's will that we live according to our state of life. Hence, in the *Seventh Commandment*, "Thou shalt not steal" (*Ex. xx. 15*), He safeguards those material possessions which are the condition of our life. He sanctions owner-

ship of property, because human existence depends upon the security of property. It is certainly not creditable to our age that it seeks to revive the theories of communism and socialism that were exploded two thousand years ago.

Property—ownership of material things—is sacred. The earth is of no value except when it is tilled, for of itself it produces nothing but thorns and thistles. It is rendered productive by man's labor and thus changed into a possession, a property. If you deprive the man who prepared the soil and sowed the seed of the harvest, what inducement has he to renew his toil and effort? Property is the mediate or immediate fruit of man's labor and good will. Therefore, as your labor and your will are indisputably your own, thus also their product. Labor, application, good will and independence are the result of the inviolability of property. He who has no ground to stand on stands dependent on others. Only in your property you have a solid foundation of prosperity, only through it you and yours will thrive. Private ownership of property is therefore safeguarded by the commandment, "Thou shalt not steal."

By the *Eighth Commandment*, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor" (*Ex.* xx. 16), God protects man's honor, fame, and credit and that mutual respect and confidence without which human society is impossible. Man, above all things, requires truthfulness. He who

spreads falsehood and error, who deceives his fellow-man and misleads and dupes him, poisons his mind; he commits a crime just as great or even greater than if he poisoned a public well or polluted the air with death-dealing germs. He who defames his fellow-man harms him more thereby than by robbing him of his property. Therefore God by this commandment intends to insure the stability, efficiency, and pleasure of man's mutual relations.

Thus did God by these commandments safeguard our existence, meet our wants, secure our earthly happiness and prepare us for future eternal bliss.

But God is not content with outward legality. He demands of man interior purity and justice. Hence the *Ninth* and *Tenth Commandments*: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, neither shalt thou desire his wife . . . nor anything that is his." (*Ex. xx. 17.*) He searches our mind and heart in order to root out the evil, and therefore forbids bad thoughts and sinful desires. We must above all be pure, just and true in God's sight, and then our whole external deportment will be regulated by His will.

Thus has God, by His Ten Commandments, delivered unto mankind a law which suffices for all conditions and for all times. If we scrupulously obeyed this law there would be need of no other. And every other law, in order to be true, just, and wholesome, must be based upon it. As

soon as it conflicts with *one* of them it is not only illegitimate, but harmful. If all men would faithfully observe these commandments, life on earth would be truly happy; indeed, a foretaste of heavenly bliss. Let us therefore resolve to order our lives according to their precepts and thereby escape eternal ruin.

OBJECTIONS

1. *It is impossible for man to keep God's commandments: they are against nature.*

Not one of those who call the observance of God's commandments impossible can point out in any one of them anything that is not entirely reasonable, and instead of being against nature, is not demanded by it. Does it seem reasonable to any one of sound sense to have other gods besides the one true God? Or that he worship, for instance, the sun, the moon, the stars, animals, or creatures of his own hand? Does it seem permissible to man to take the name of God in vain, to abuse His name by cursing and blaspheming? Is it not quite reasonable and natural that man, to whom six days were given wherein to work and attend to business for his own profit, should devote one of the seven days of the week to the service of God and rest from servile work? Is it not demanded by reason and by natural law that we honor and obey those who gave us life, reared, and instructed us? Shall it be permissible that men hate, persecute, attack, and kill one an-

other and thereby endanger the security and peace of society? Shall it be lawful for a man endowed with reason to indulge unrestrained in sensuality and thus to lower himself beneath the brute creation? Shall a man be permitted to possess himself of his fellow-man's property by theft, robbery or fraud? Shall it be lawful to deceive others by word or deed, or to deprive him of his reputation and honor? Is external righteousness sufficient if we meanwhile indulge in sordid desires and impure thoughts? Indeed, no candid mind can find anything in God's commandments that is against nature or not demanded by reason. How, then, can that be called unreasonable what reason itself demands? And if the commandments are reasonable, their observance is not impossible: because God does not demand the impossible of man.

2. *Suicide, in certain circumstances, is permissible, or at least excusable.*

Suicide is forbidden—*always* and *under all circumstances*. The only defender of suicide is the atheist, because for him there exists no divine law; according to his view man is his own master and can do with himself whatever he wishes; he can take his own life whenever, wherever and in what manner he pleases. But *there is a God*: hence man is *not* his own master; God is his Lord, for He created him—body and soul. God is the Lord of his life and death. If man therefore takes his own life, he takes what belongs to God.

Moreover, God endowed man with an ardent love of self-preservation, and thereby indicated very clearly that we are bound to take due care to preserve and sustain our life.

Deliberate suicide is all the more an enormous crime because it is generally the result of a life of passion and sin. The libertine, the voluptuary, the hypocrite, the defaulter, and thief are amongst those who are more or less inclined to take their own life. Self-condemnation, fear of discovery, dread of being obliged to beg or to work after squandering one's means—these are among the causes which lead to suicide. The suicide is, moreover, a coward: he intends to escape from shame, suffering, and misery—but he does not remember that his act will cast him into everlasting pain and eternal damnation.

3. "*Property is theft.*"

This is Proudhon's expressive phrase, according to which everybody is a thief. If this be so, there arises the question: From whom did the first owners steal their property? If there were no first owners, there could be no theft. If one or more individuals were *first* owners, they could *steal* it from no one: hence we must admit property ownership *before* theft was possible. Or was mankind in general the owner? Then we must admit that God ordained it thus, and acknowledge Him as the Creator and Sovereign of all things. Thus we come to the question, "Did God, the absolute Lord of creation, give the earth and its

goods to mankind in general with the stipulation to leave it undivided?" The answer must be "No": for God Himself vindicates the rights of property, the right of private ownership, by giving the commandments, "Thou shalt not steal" and "Thou shalt not covet." Thereby God Himself declares, "Property ownership is *not* theft; but the violation of property rights is theft."

4. *It is unnatural, and therefore impossible, to lead a chaste life.*

Two famous physicians refute this assertion as follows:

"There is scarcely a more erroneous opinion than the one that asserts that the desire for the gratification of sexual lust was implanted by nature and is demanded unrestrictedly. The advocates of this view seem not to know that the more or less strong inclination to sexual gratification depends more or less on the correct dietary and other habits of the individual." (*Graham.*)

"It cannot be too strongly impressed upon the mind that the strictest continence and purity is consistent with the physiological and moral laws, and that the gratification of sexual desires, inclinations, and passions can be justified no more on physical or physiological than on moral or religious grounds." (*Beal.*)

Example**A DEFENDER OF GOD'S COMMANDMENTS**

Pollion, a Christian well known for his intrepid faith and virtue, was a heroic defender of God's commandments. During the persecution in the reign of Diocletian the consul Probus had scarcely arrived in the city where Pollion lived when the latter was denounced to him as a zealous Christian. In the course of the examination Pollion mentioned the well-known fact that even torments and death were unable to compel Christians to transgress the commandments of the Great King.

"To what king and to what commandments do you allude?" asked Probus. Pollion replied: "I allude to the commandments of the eternal king, Jesus Christ." Probus: "What do these commandments require of you?" Pollion: "They command that we worship only one God, and teach that images of wood or stone can not possibly be gods. They insist on pure morals, and confirm the just in virtue. They instruct virgins to aspire to the perfection of their state, and exhort the married to observe conjugal chastity. They remind masters to be meek in their commands, and exhort the servants to be subject to them in due humility and obedience. They command that subjects obey their rulers in all just and reasonable things; in short, they teach us to honor father and mother, to harbor strangers, to succor the poor, to embrace all men in Christian charity, to harm

no one, to bear injustice patiently, to disengage our hearts from the goods of this world, and, finally, to believe that eternal happiness awaits him who observes these commandments."

Despite this lucid explanation, Pollion was condemned to suffer death by fire.

CHAPTER IX

The Transgression of the Commandments, or Actual Sin

THE voluntary transgression of God's commandments is called *sin*. Sin is a rebellion against God, the Lord of heaven and earth, a manifest contempt of His clearly indicated will. God commands only what is conducive to the welfare of our body and the salvation of our soul. The sinner, however, despises God's love and friendship and makes return for His benefits by ingratitude. Every sin is an *offense* against God, for by its commission man prefers the creature to God, and thus annihilates, as far as he is concerned, God's supreme sovereignty and detracts from the honor due to Him: hence sin is called an offense.

From this definition it is obvious that the transgression of divine law, in order to be properly called sin, must be *voluntary*, for sin presupposes consent. The corrupt inclinations to which the will does not assent are temptations to sin, but not sin in themselves. If they are sometimes called sin in Holy Scripture, it means, according to the explanation of the Church, that they originate in sin and lead to it.

By every sin *guilt* is incurred. Man is bound to submit to the will of God by willing what He wills. By sinning man puts his will in opposition



MARY AT THE TOMB OF OUR LORD

*"Jesus saith to her, Mary. She turning saith to Him,
Rabboni (which is to say, Master)."*

to the will of God. This not willing of that which is our duty constitutes guilt. Hence guilt is inseparable from sin; it is that which renders sin a sin.

Because God's law may be transgressed in various ways—by thought, word or deed—sin is divided accordingly. In addition to sins of deed there are also sins of omission. As the law which is transgressed by sin comprises besides our duties toward God also those toward our fellow-men and ourselves, sin is divided also in sins against God, against our fellow-men and against ourselves. As sin can be committed by one's own act, or through the act which we have caused to be committed by another person, it is divided into personal and accessory sin. And because sin can either deprive the soul entirely of its life, or only weaken the latter, it is divided into mortal and venial sin.

Mortal sin is that together with which the life of the soul can not exist. Venial sin, on the contrary, is that with which the life of the soul may exist. As the life of the body is the soul and the life of the soul is God: therefore mortal sin may be defined to consist in the soul's irregular attachment to the creature and in the total defection from God, the last end for which we were created; whereas venial sin is also an irregular attachment to the creature, but not in such a degree as to separate us entirely from God, our last end.

What, then, does man do by committing a mortal sin? Let us hear the reply of St. Thomas Aquinas: "Mortal sin is infinite in its malice because it is a rebellion, an offense against God and an attack on Him. Thus considered, one mortal sin is like the other: each one is a rebellion, an offense against God." For this reason the offense committed against God by a single mortal sin is infinite, because it is committed against an infinite Being. Hence the logical deduction is: Every man, by committing a mortal sin, thereby incurs eternal reprobation by God, endless punishment, everlasting damnation.

Witness, in proof of this assertion, the explicit testimony of Holy Writ: Lucifer, the greatest of all the princes of heaven, raised above all angels, standing next to the throne of God, committed a single sin, a mortal sin of pride, and this most favored angel, this assistant at God's throne, is cast into the deepest abyss, is condemned to eternal punishment in hell because he offended the supreme majesty of God by one mortal sin. How great, then, must be the ineffable malice of mortal sin! A single one—and the greatest angel in heaven finds no mercy; a single one—and legions of angels, the sharers in his crime, are cast out together with him from eternal happiness into everlasting torment! How terrible, then, must mortal sin be, when, on account of only one, hell was created, when a single one casts a soul into hell! Should we, then, not tremble at the thought of

such a sin? Ought we not be still more terrified when we have committed one?

A single mortal sin is an infinite offense against God. Witness in proof of this assertion, the sin of our first parents. In paradise they transgressed God's commandment and thereby committed a mortal sin. What was this one sin's consequence? The wrath, the curse of God befell the whole world to such a degree that God, for this one sin, rejected not only the transgressors of His law, but all their descendants, all mankind—with one sole exception. The exception was, in view of the promised redemption, the Mother of the Redeemer, the immaculate Virgin Mary. Do we now conceive how terrible the offense against the infinitely perfect God committed by sin must be when a single one brought His curse upon all men and excluded them from heaven, for which they were created?

Let us proceed to another stage in our consideration. The malice of a single mortal sin is infinite because it demands an infinite reparation. A single mortal sin had been committed: its effect was the wrath and curse of God upon mankind. Who was able to reconcile this wrath, to cancel this curse? The offense was infinite, therefore infinite reparation was required. An angel or man was incapable of making it: an Infinite Being was offended, therefore infinite reparation must be made; the reconciliation must be effected by an Infinite Being. The Son of God had to

become man, had to suffer reproach, pain and finally the cruel death of crucifixion to accomplish this reparation and reconciliation. And every one who commits a mortal sin thereby commits a crime no less than that of our first parents, a crime for which, as often as it is repeated, the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ would have to be renewed if Our Lord had not, in the holy sacraments of His Church, left us the merits of the reparation and atonement made by Himself.

But if the sinner does not apply these merits to himself, one mortal sin will suffice to close heaven to him and to cast him for ever into hell. "There shall not enter into heaven any thing defiled." (*Apoc.* xxi. 27.) And it is sin that defiles man.

OBJECTIONS

1. *The sin of our first parents was a more grievous one than that which I commit.*

The sin of our first parents was rebellion against God: every sin is such. God commanded our first parents: "You shall not eat of that tree." In like manner God commands us: "Thou shalt—thou shalt not—not kill, not commit adultery, not steal, not bear false witness," etc. Are we, then, less guilty if we commit a mortal sin than were our first parents? Like they, we disobey God's commandment, and like they, we deserve punishment.

2. *It is man's nature to sin: why, then, shall he strive to avoid sinning?*

Only concupiscence, not sin, is in man's nature: and concupiscence in itself is not sin. It is also man's nature to die, and yet we are bound to try to preserve and prolong our life. In the same manner it is our duty to avoid sin, and we can do so by the assistance of God's grace. Freedom of will is an essential condition for the commission of sin: hence it is in our power to avoid sin, and our duty to do so.

3. *It seems rather rigorous to reckon among sins the thoughts that are not effectuated.*

God Himself includes in His commandments the sins of thought when He says: "Thou shalt not covet," etc. The evil desire, being an act of the will, implies consent. Therefore Our Lord says: "From the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies." (*Matt.* xv. 19.) God accepts the will for the deed—as well in bad as in good respects. Whoever wilfully harbors an evil thought and desire has already committed the evil deed in his heart. "But I say to you: that whoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart." (*Matt.* v. 28.)

4. *Accessory sins! What do other people's sins concern me?*

Accessory sins are those that others commit, but of which we are the cause. We may cause an evil deed by command, counsel, consent, praise, aid, defense, instigation or silence, and by omit-

ting to punish it if such be our duty. Again, we may incite some one to sin, or omit to prevent his sin. Whoever is in a position to prevent an evil deed and omits to do so is the cause of its commission and therefore accessory to it.

5. How can I distinguish mortal and venial sins? Their effects are so unlike that it must be of vast importance to know the difference.

Mortal sin is a grievous or great offense or transgression against the law of God. To make a sin mortal or grievous two conditions are required. First, the offense must be of a serious nature in itself, or be serious on account of the importance attached to it by the lawgiver. Secondly, the offense must be committed with perfect consent and with sufficient knowledge.

Venial sin is a slight transgression of the law of God, the wilful and deliberate commission of an act by which an essential duty is violated only in a trifling manner. A sin can be venial either because the offense in itself is slight and attended with no pernicious results or because, though in itself grievous, it is committed without full deliberation and perfect consent. However, what in itself is a venial sin may become a mortal one if it cause grievous harm or scandal or when it is committed through contempt of the law.

It is very difficult to determine whether a sin is mortal or venial, because so much depends on the circumstances. This, however, is certain: An act is a mortal sin only when God is no longer

the last end of man's aspirations. (*St. Thomas Aq.*) For mortal sin is man's total abandonment of God as his last end and his full inclination toward the creature as the object of his existence.

Examples

RATHER DIE THAN COMMIT SIN

The Thebean Legion left a glorious example of Christian fortitude, whereby we may learn to abhor sin as a rebellion against God. When Emperor Maximian was about to compel these brave troops to persecute their fellow-Christians, their leader manfully replied: "True, emperor, we are your troops, and you are our lord. But at the same time we are the servants of the supreme Lord of heaven and earth. We owe you military service, but we owe God a blameless life. For this reason we may not obey your orders whenever they conflict with the commandments of God. By wrongful submission to our earthly lord we may not rebel against Our Lord and God in heaven. Remember, O emperor, that every sin is a rebellion against God." Thus spoke this true Christian hero, and he and his comrades died amid cruel tortures rather than disobey the law of God.

A TENDER CONSCIENCE

Maria Teresa, consort of King Louis XIV. of France, had a very tender conscience. Bitterly

bewailing one day a fault of which she had been guilty, she was told by her attendants that she need not weep so much, for it was only a venial transgression. "No matter," she said, still weeping. "God has been offended, and that is a deadly stroke to my heart."



OUR LORD WASHES HIS DISCIPLES' FEET

"If I wash thee not, thou shalt have no part with Me."

CHAPTER X

The Punishment of Sin

I. HELL

THE punishment of sin, of man's voluntary contempt of God, is the sinner's eternal reprobation by God, and the pain connected therewith. Both together constitute *hell*.

St. Augustine tells us to descend often into hell during life in order to escape it after death. He intends to say thereby that we ought often to meditate on the punishment of the damned, because then we would surely avoid sin and escape damnation.

Let us, therefore, consider hell, and in doing so let us adhere strictly to the Gospel. We shall say nothing of hell that has not been said of it before by our Divine Saviour. We shall not indulge in speculation. Christ does not lie; His doctrine concerning hell is just as true as everything else He taught. Let us, therefore, consider His utterances concerning hell as soberly as possible, in order to arrive at a clear knowledge of the subject.

The first statement of Christ, thereafter often recurring in the Gospels, concerning eternal punishment relates to "exterior darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (*Matt. viii. 12.*) Confining ourselves literally to the expres-

sion used by Our Lord, even then we are confronted with an awful picture: extreme, eternal darkness, perpetual absence of light being the most terrible experience that can befall a man; for there is nothing so essential to a living being as light. The literal sense of this passage, however, is but an indication of its true meaning, and conveys to us more than human speech can express. In the language of Holy Writ the word "light" is used to represent all that is beautiful, lovely, pleasant, and reviving, everything that causes joy. Hence, in Scripture, God Himself is sometimes called simply "the Light," and His glory in heaven is styled "Light inaccessible." On the contrary, darkness is all that is horrible, terrible, dreadful, painful, harrowing. "Exterior darkness" therefore must signify extreme misery, absence of every boon. Which means: the reprobate exist, but they are deprived of every joy, every comfort, every gratification. How does this view appear to our reason? It approves of the statement, and replies: "Yes, it must be thus; to the reprobate all that is good *must* be lost—the uncreated good, God, and the created good, God's property.

God is lost to the damned. The bliss of the just consists in the possession of God. To possess God is infinite happiness; to be debarred from Him must therefore be extreme misery, infinite loss, endless desire and craving. *All created things* are lost to the damned. The use of

God's creation is granted to us for the time of our life and with the condition that we employ the creature to learn to know God, to love, serve, and glorify Him and thus to arrive at our destiny—heaven. And what has the sinner done? He treated God's property as if it were his own; he did still worse: he abused the gifts of God to offend Him: As far as he is concerned, he subverted and destroyed God's entire plan. Consequently he is thrown out of God's kingdom into extreme darkness, extreme misery, where eternal horror dwells. This is what is called by Christ "exterior darkness."

Christ's second declaration concerning the wicked is: "Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels." (*Matt.* xxv. 41.) He speaks of Himself as the Judge of the world uttering these words. What a terrible sentence! A moment shall come when He who for love of us became man and suffered the most horrible tortures shall pass on the impenitent sinner for whom He died in vain, the sentence: "Depart from me, you cursed!" How terrible to be cursed by God, to have to depart from Him for all eternity burdened with this curse! And to depart where? "Into everlasting fire."

Holy Scripture in the Old and New Testaments often mentions a fire that shall never be quenched, an everlasting fire, as punishment of the reprobate. If so-called free-thinkers do not believe in

it, ask them what fire really is. They can not tell you. Now, to speak of something of which we know nothing is, to use a mild expression, rather arrogant. One thing we all do know: of all the elements, fire is the one whose effects we feel most painfully. If Holy Writ calls the torments which the reprobate suffer "fire that is never quenched," the expression is the correct one to designate, in a manner, their intensity.

Withal, explain the punishment of hell in any manner whatsoever: it is a doctrine of faith that the damned suffer, first, the pain of loss, separation from God. This is the punishment for despising and abandoning God, for whom we were created. Secondly, the punishment of hell consists in the pain of sense, which is the penalty incurred by the sinner for the abuse and perversion of God's creatures by making his senses the instruments of sin. This abuse and perversion is often punished even in this world. When a person becomes ill because he indulged his passions without restraint, his body is consumed by a kind of fire. Fever, for instance, causes a heat which may well be likened to fire. And as a disorder of the body creates heat, thus also a disorder of the soul. The faculties of the soul, like the soul itself, are indestructible. The passions kindle in the soul a sort of fire. In hell the sinner's passions remain ungratified, and consume themselves, like fire, in continual fury. This fire is indeed effective, but invisible and impal-

pable. There exists, then, besides the material fire, another immaterial one.

The third statement made by Christ concerning the reprobate is: "Their worm dieth not." (*Mark ix. 43.*) These words were spoken metaphorically: by "worm" Our Lord meant the bad conscience. The damned acknowledge that God is infinitely just, and therefore hates and punishes evil. They admit that their suffering was caused by their own fault; therefore they are tormented by their conscience: it is their "worm that dieth not." Even on earth the sinner often suffers terrible pangs of conscience. Criminals often, in order to escape them, after evading justice for years, voluntarily confess their crimes before the tribunal of a judge in order to relieve themselves by expiating their guilt, even by death.

The consciousness of their guilt is the undying worm of the reprobate. The damned person did not desire another fate. He did not wish to be with God, but renounced Him: his will is his hell. He placed himself in conflict with all creation and frustrated God's designs: his will is his hell. He is in the company of the reprobate; during life he was frequently warned by God not to associate with the wicked, but he sought their company, lived according to their principles, labored for their purposes, and now dwells with them forever: his will is his hell. Had he cleansed his soul from sin by true contrition and a sincere confession, he would have been saved by the precious

Blood of Jesus Christ; but he preferred to remain in sin till his very last breath, and now must remain therein for all eternity: his will is his hell. God no longer has anything to do with him.

The reprobate have fallen away forever from the kingdom of God. Forever! Let us not forget that in all references of Christ and of Holy Scripture relating to this doctrine recurs the word "everlasting." "Depart from me into *everlasting* fire"; "their worm *dieth not*"; "they will enter into *everlasting* punishment." Whoever is ever so lightly acquainted with Holy Scripture must concede that the everlasting duration of hell is a Christian dogma, the doctrine of revelation. And what does reason say? It says the soul of the reprobate is immortal by its nature like the soul of the just man. If, then, the reward of the just is everlasting, the punishment of the sinner must also be everlasting: it must last as long as the soul survives—for all eternity.

A terrible thought: to suffer *forever*, without hope of release; to suffer for thousands of centuries and see no end! The Blessed Henry Suso makes use of the following parable in order to impress upon our minds the endless duration of eternity: Let us suppose that the injured Creator should make with His suffering creature this hard condition, that, after filling the whole universe with one gigantic rock, He would permit a little bird to come back at the end of each hundred thousand years to pick one single particle from

this immense mass, and to the reprobate in hell it had been said: "You shall not suffer for all eternity; when the rock is consumed your sufferings shall be ended"—these unfortunates would be filled with ineffable joy, because there would be hope for them, however delayed, that at some future time they would be released. And yet this inconceivable number of centuries seems almost as long as eternity itself, because we scarcely can imagine when the end shall come. In truth, however, it is as little like unto eternity as one second, because all finite things can never be compared with the infinite, never can approach comparison. If, therefore, anybody would enter a contract to enjoy during the term described every imaginable pleasure and to possess and be satiated with all that his heart desires, and then to be condemned to hell, he would certainly act most foolishly to do it; for finally a time would come when of all these millions of milliards of years the last moment would arrive, and if it had passed, an unhappy eternity—an *endless* period—would come.

Or let us imagine that the offended Creator were to make with the reprobate the contract: From all his floods of tears He would accept and lay by one in a thousand years, till he had shed enough, not to make a river, but to fill up to the very summit the immense void between heaven and earth. Consider well the terms of the agreement: what kind of a grace does it seem to you? The oldest inhabitant of that land of desolation

would yet have shed but six tears—six tears against an ocean! The term surely could never arrive! this is but another idea for eternity itself! You are mistaken; the time would certainly come when he would first see half of his immense task completed; then he would achieve another half of the still immense remainder, and at last the time would come when the unhappy wretch would exult to see the immeasurable ocean just swelling to its full complement and wanting just one tear to attain its level. And would not God then, do you think, a God of infinite love, He who once died for man, would He not at least then begin to relent and make some allowance for all this suffering? No, not the slightest! The supposition is a fiction, and it will never be realized. Eternity will be still entire, the reprobate will be tormented forever and ever, for all eternity. Indeed: “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” (*Heb. x. 31.*)

II. PURGATORY

Only they who depart this life in mortal sin, in aversion to God, in malice toward and rebellion against Him, their Creator and Redeemer, are condemned to hell. Yet not all who depart this life in the friendship of God enter heaven at once. Only he can enter heaven who is perfectly pure, and scarcely a soul amongst thousands is perfectly pure at the moment of death. Therefore reason pleads for a place of purgation after

death. Besides, the temporal punishment for sin often remains after its guilt has been remitted. Therefore the Church declares that there is a purgatory, a place where the soul, in the next world, is purified from such defects which, though they do not debar it from ultimate entrance into heaven, yet must be removed before it can be admitted there.

Purgatory is a state of punishment, a condition in which the temporal punishment of sin is effected by *suffering*—not, as here on earth, by penitential works of reparation. The punishment is in due relation to the sin punished. Turning away from God, and irregular inclination to creatures being the essence of sin, the soul in purgatory suffers, in punishment for the first, temporary suspension of the beatific vision of God, and for the latter the pain of sense.

Although the Church has made no decision as to the nature of the pains of purgatory, it was her constant opinion that punishment by fire was one of them. St. Paul tells us that “the fire shall try every man’s work, of what sort it is. If any man’s work abide . . . he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work burn, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.” (1 *Cor.* iii. 15.) Now there can be no suffering “as if by fire” in heaven, and as the fire of hell is not for trying a man’s work, but for tormenting those who have been already tried and condemned, the fire mentioned as “trying a man’s

work" must be the fire of purgatory. We find the idea of a purgatorian fire mentioned in the early Christian centuries by ecclesiastical writers of various nations. St. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage (died 258), writes: "We are cleansed from sin by pain and fire of long duration." St. Basil (died 379) and St. Gregory of Nyssa (died about 394) also mention a "cleansing fire." St. Isidore of Pelusiam in Egypt (died about 450) distinguishes between "a fire of purgation and a fire burning to the end."

It is certain, moreover, that other pains besides the punishment by fire are suffered in purgatory. The temporary deprivation of the beatific vision of God is, beyond doubt, the greatest of these pains. Of the pain of the senses the devout Thomas à Kempis, treating of hell, says: "There is no crime which has not its special pain." This certainly applies also to purgatory. Pride is punished by painful debasement, frivolity by remorse of conscience, covetousness by privation, etc.

As to the punishment by fire, even if it were to be understood in a figurative sense, it would be no less painful. The higher an organism is, the more it is subject to sensation. The soul of man is of a much higher degree than his body, and therefore much more amenable to pain. True, here on earth it dwells in the body, and we feel physical pain mostly in the latter. In purgatory the soul, divested from the body, will be the seat

of pain, and on account of its higher organism, it will be so much the more sensible to it.

The same is true concerning the pain of loss, that intense yearning for the vision of God, for the possession of our supreme good. If thirst, the body's desire for water, can become so great a torment; if cold, the absence of the proper degree of bodily warmth, can cause such intense pain: how may, then, the soul be tortured by its thirst for God, that supreme good, for whom it was created! True, during our sojourn on earth we are also deprived of the beatific vision of God, and experience no pain on that account. With the souls in purgatory, however, it is different. A child that never knew his mother will scarcely feel sorry when, as a man, he is told of her death; but a child that learned from infancy to love his mother will later on, when she dies, or even when he is separated from her only for a time, feel the most poignant grief. Thus the suffering souls: they have learned to find their whole happiness in God, hence the temporary separation from Him is their greatest pain, a pain that is the supreme one of purgatory.

As to the intensity of the pains of sense in purgatory, some theologians tell us that they are not inferior to those of hell, except in duration—those of hell have no end, those of purgatory are but for a time; that the fire is the same as that of hell, created to cause pain and torment; that our earthly fire is as painted fire compared to it,

and that all the evils of this world and all the sufferings and tortures of the martyrs fall far below the pains endured in purgatory. St. Thomas Aquinas says that the least pain of purgatory is not only greater than the greatest pain on earth, but greater than all the pains of the earth put together.

Yet the souls in purgatory are not without consolations. These are their love of God and the certainty of enjoying Him in glory. The love of the soul for God sweetens, in some manner, all its pains and causes it to rejoice at them, because they are inflicted by God. As the soul loves God with the purest affection, and knows its sufferings to be in accordance with His holy will in order to its purification, it conforms itself perfectly to the divine decree. While in purgatory, it sees that this is pleasing to God; it has His holy will alone in view, and well knows that its purification is necessary that it may enter heaven all fair and lovely. Thus the souls in purgatory have at once the greatest contentment and the greatest suffering.

The certainty of possessing God is another source of comfort to the souls in purgatory. Their lot is fixed; a happy eternity will be their portion hereafter: no longer doubt, no longer uncertainty, no longer risk, no longer any fear. At this view the souls almost forget their sufferings, for their grief is so mixed with joy as nearly to drown their pain. Such is the way in which God

tempers the chastisements which His justice forces Him to exercise against the souls who had not fully expiated their guilt before death, or who died before expiating the debt of temporal punishment still due after the remission of mortal sin.

According to the doctrine of the Church, we can and ought to help the souls in purgatory by prayer and by offering up for them the holy sacrifice of the Mass and other good works. This doctrine is taught by the holy Fathers and theologians. St. Augustine writes: "We may not deny that the souls of the departed are relieved by the piety of the living when the holy sacrifice of propitiation is offered for them or when alms are given for their sake. But it benefits only those who in life made themselves worthy of this help." And again he writes: "Let the heretics object whatever they may: it is nevertheless an ancient custom of the Church to pray and offer sacrifice for the dead." St. Chrysostom says: "For good reasons the apostles ordained that the departed are remembered in the holy sacrifice of the Mass, for they knew that it would accrue to their benefit."

The Church, moreover, teaches that the souls in purgatory, although unable to do anything for themselves, can and do come to our aid. The souls of the departed, for whom we pray, are grateful to us. In purgatory they pray for their benefactors and obtain many graces for them.

God grants their petitions for others most willingly, because they are in the state of grace. Indeed, they do not only hasten to cancel their debt of gratitude to us, but God Himself, whose glory is promoted by the release of these souls, will help them to reward us for the aid we rendered them. St. Alphonsus writes: "Whoever aids the suffering souls may confidently hope for his own salvation; for when such a soul is released by some one's prayers and good works, it implores God continually for his salvation, and God will not refuse this petition." The souls whom we released from purgatory are our most zealous intercessors at the Throne of Mercy.

OBJECTIONS

I. Against Hell

1. *The doctrine of the eternity of hell conflicts with the doctrine of God's mercy.*

The Church teaches: God promised pardon to the repentant sinner, even if his sins were to outnumber those of all mankind. But the time to avail himself of this pardon is confined to this life. The condition for obtaining it is true contrition and worthy reception of the Sacrament of Penance, if possible. Thus far and no farther goes God's mercy. The reprobate, having missed the aim and end of his creation, can nevermore return to this world to repair his sad mistake. After death comes the night, when we can work

no longer. Faith teaches us that a single mortal sin not forgiven and atoned for by penance during life is punished eternally in hell. Whoever sins because God is merciful and longanimous, let him take heed that he despair not on his death-bed of the mercy which he abused so often.

2. *God is cruel in condemning the reprobate to eternal punishment.*

God is just, and therefore condemns the reprobate to hell. Is a judge cruel when he condemns a criminal to death?

3. *Nobody knows where hell is and how long it is to last.*

As to the location of hell, we may leave it to God. The length of its duration is stated plainly and distinctly by Christ: it is eternal, without relief and without end: "Depart from me, you cursed, into *everlasting* fire. . . . And they shall go into *everlasting* punishment." (Matt. xxv. 41, 46.)

4. *Well, I shall have company in hell.*

You shall, indeed, have company in hell, but this company will not mitigate your punishment; it will rather increase it. You will be imprisoned for all eternity with all the reprobates that ever lived on earth, and with those monsters of iniquity, the devils. Horrible company!

5. *Man is predestined either for heaven or hell: hence his life has no influence on his ultimate fate.*

The Catholic Church teaches that it depends on a person's good or bad life whether heaven or

hell shall be his eternal abode. God created all men for heaven. But when He sees the wicked life of a certain person, He decrees hell for him. Man does not lead a wicked life because God sees it, but God sees the good or wicked life because man leads it. Whoever is damned is not damned because God predestined him to hell, but because he compelled God to damn him for his sins.

6. *How is it consistent with God's goodness to create a man of whom He foresees that in the end will be damned?*

God is free and independent. If God's goodness were able to prevent Him from condemning a man, man's malice would be able to control His liberty and omnipotence, which is an impossible supposition. Man's damnation is not caused by God, but by man himself. If he would avoid sin, God would not foresee it and its consequences.

II. *Against Purgatory*

1. *The doctrine of purgatory is unbiblical and unreasonable.*

The doctrine of purgatory is proved from the Old and New Testaments. In the second book of Machabees we read that Judas, the valiant commander, sent to Jerusalem twelve thousand drachms of silver, in order that sacrifice should be offered for those who had been slain in battle. The reason therefor is given in the following words: "Because he considered that they who had fallen asleep with godliness had great grace laid

up for them. It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins." (2 *Mach.* xii. 46.) But if it be a wholesome thought and holy practice to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from sins, there must be some souls who stand in need of our prayers, and as the souls in hell can receive no benefit from them, and the souls in heaven require not the aid of our prayers, there must be some third or middle state in which some souls are detained, and that place is purgatory.

It may be objected by Protestants that the Book of Machabees is not contained in their Bible, and therefore is not the Word of God; but they should recollect that it has been recognized as canonical from the earliest ages, and always acknowledged as such by the Catholic Church, on whose authority alone they must rely for the canonicity of the Scriptures, because they received them from her, and because she alone is appointed by divine authority to declare what is God's Word and what is not.

From the New Testament we may gather many passages in support of the doctrine of purgatory. Christ says: "He that shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in the world to come." (*Matt.* xii. 32.) This text clearly proves that some sins are forgiven in the next world. Yet in heaven sins can not be forgiven, for sin can not enter there; nor can they be forgiven in hell, for "out

of hell there is no redemption"; therefore there must be a middle place between heaven and hell, and that middle place is purgatory.

Christ speaks (*Matt.* v. 26) of a prison whence there is no escape till the last farthing is repaid. There must, then, be a place from which release is possible after payment of the debt incurred. This place is purgatory.

St. Paul writes: "No other foundation no man can lay, but that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day of the Lord shall declare it, because it shall be revealed in fire; and this fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide, which he hath built thereon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work burn, he shall suffer, but he himself shall be saved: yet so as by fire." (*1 Cor.* iii. 11-15.) From this passage the doctors of the Church concluded the existence of a fire of purgation by which those are cleansed who, at their death, are found guilty of venial faults. They are saved, "yet so as by fire."

St. John says that nothing defiled can enter heaven: "And there shall not enter it anything defiled." (*Apoc.* xxi. 27.) From this passage it follows that a person guilty of even a venial sin can not enter heaven, because he is rendered defiled and unclean by it in some degree. Neither can he be damned for it, because nothing but

mortal sin is punished with eternal flames. There must, therefore, be a middle state, where some sins are both punished and expiated.

Is there anything unreasonable in this doctrine?

2. How can the soul, being a spirit, feel the effects of a material fire?

How is it possible that during our earthly life our soul experiences pain and joy? Or does not the soul participate in the pain suffered by the body? Is it not really that part of our being on which our sensations of grief and joy depend? True, at present they depend on the *connection* of body and soul; but why should it be impossible to the Creator to substitute, after the body's death, another medium, which may impart the pain of fire to the soul? Moreover, there is no dogmatical declaration concerning the equality of the fire in purgatory.

Examples

THE DYING MAN

A wealthy man, whose death seemed imminent, would not hear of receiving the sacraments. His pious wife, greatly alarmed, importuned him to allow her to introduce a priest. The sick man at length consented, under the condition that not a word about confession would be mentioned. The priest came and approached the bedside of the sick man, regarding him intently in silence. "What are you thinking about, standing there

without a word?" the patient finally inquired. The priest replied: "I was thinking what a great change shall soon befall you. Now you dwell in a beautifully furnished room; after death in your soul's present state your abode will be in extreme darkness. Now you are surrounded by a loving wife and dutiful children; soon you shall share the company of reprobates. Now you enjoy the comforts of a downy bed; in a few hours, perhaps, you shall find yourself in the flames of hell."

And the dying man, turning to the priest, exclaimed: "Come, Father, help me die a Christian, help me to make my peace with God."

ST. PERPETUA'S VISION OF PURGATORY

St. Perpetua, a martyr who lived in the early part of the second century, relates: "I had the following vision: I saw my brother Dinocrates coming out of a dark place, where there were many others exceedingly heated and thirsty. His face was dirty, his complexion pale, with the ulcer in his face of which he died at seven years of age. I prayed for him. It seemed to be a great distance between him and me, so that it was impossible for us to meet each other. Near him stood a vessel full of water, whose brim was higher than his stature. He attempted to drink, but though he had water, he could not reach it. This mightily grieved me, and I awoke. By this I knew that my brother was in pain, but I trusted that by prayer I could relieve him. So I began

to pray for him, beseeching God with tears day and night that He would grant my request. Then I saw the place which I had beheld dark before, luminous, and Dinocrates, with his body very clean and well clad, refreshing himself, and instead of a wound, a scar only. I awoke, and I knew he was relieved from pain."

ST. LIDWINA AND THE SUFFERING SOULS

St. Lidwina, who suffered the most painful maladies for thirty-four years, was favored by frequent visions, during which she was often permitted to descend, in company of her angel, into purgatory. There she found the souls of the departed arranged according to various grades, suffering manifold and severe torments. Amongst them she recognized many of her friends. Therefore she esteemed the terrible sufferings of her long illness for nothing, and added to them many other painful works of penance for the suffering souls. She never wearied praying for them and wept at the thought of their severe punishment. She even formed the heroic resolution to suffer her terrible afflictions to the end of the world, if it so please God, if she thereby could release the souls of her friends from purgatory, rather than enter heaven immediately after death and permit the souls in purgatory to continue suffering.



THE HOLY EUCHARIST

*O sacrament most holy ! O sacrament divine
All praise and all thanksgiving be every moment Thine.*

PART II

Jesus Christ

CHAPTER I

The Life of Jesus Christ

FOUR thousand years after the fall of our first parents passed before the promise made to them in paradise was fulfilled. Then, in the fullness of time, the Redeemer of mankind was born of the Virgin Mary. Simply as a historical fact that needs no embellishment. St. Luke relates the event as follows:

“And it came to pass that in those days there went out a decree from Cesar Augustus that the whole world should be enrolled. This enrolling was first made by Cyrinus the governor of Syria. And all went to be enrolled, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee out of the city of Nazareth into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem: because he was of the house and family of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his espoused wife, who was with child. And it came to pass that when they were there her days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him up in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.” (*Luke ii. 1-7.*)

This is the evangelist's account of the birth of Jesus Christ. From it the world numbers the years of its history, those preceding and those

following this event. Who was it that was born? The long-expected Messiah, the Saviour of mankind. And how did He accomplish salvation? By uniting in Himself the divine and the human nature. His human nature made it possible for Him, who was the Son of God, to suffer, and by His sufferings to make reparation for our sins. His divine nature, or rather the Divine Person in which the divine and human nature are united, gave infinite value to His sufferings. Therefore it was possible for the newly born child to become the High Priest who reconciled sinful mankind with God. This redemptional nature of the Saviour is the foundation of Christianity.

“And after eight days were accomplished that the child should be circumcised, His name was called Jesus, which was called by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.” (*Luke* ii. 21.)

The incarnate Son of God, after being born from the immaculate Virgin Mary in the stable of Bethlehem, manifested Himself both to the Jews and the Gentiles. To the shepherds who watched their flocks in the fields near Bethlehem, and who were Jews, He sent an angel. To the Wise Men in the East, who were Gentiles, He sent a wonderful star, to indicate to them the fulfilment of the prophecy of Balaam: “A star shall rise out of Jacob and a scepter shall spring up from Israel, and shall strike the chiefs of Moab and shall waste all the children of Seth.” (*Num.* xxiv. 17.) This prophecy was known to the pagan

nations, and they had long awaited the coming of this star. It appeared to the three Magi, or Wise Men, known also as the Three Kings, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar, in the night when the Saviour was born. They set out immediately to seek Him. The star went before them till they arrived at Jerusalem, when it suddenly disappeared. Believing that they had arrived at their destination, they inquired in the city, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" Great was their surprise when no one could answer their question. "And King Herod, hearing this, was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And assembling together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where Christ should be born. But they said to him: In Bethlehem of Juda. . . . Then Herod privately calling the Wise Men learned diligently of them the time of the star which appeared to them: and sending them into Bethlehem, said: Go and diligently inquire after the child; and when you have found him, bring me word again, that I also may come down and adore him." (*Matt.* ii. 3-8.) Led by the star, the Wise Men came to Bethlehem, and found the Child with Mary, His mother. They fell upon their knees, opened their treasures and presented to Him their offerings of gold, frankincense and myrrh. When they had finished their acts of adoration, God warned them not to return to Jerusalem, where Herod sought the life of the Child, and they returned by another way to their country.

The other events of the childhood of Jesus were: His circumcision, His presentation in the temple, the flight into Egypt to escape the murderous designs of Herod, His return thence to Nazareth, and His journey at the age of twelve with His parents to Jerusalem, where He remained in the temple without their knowledge and was found after three days by His parents amongst the doctors and scribes. Of His life between His twelfth and thirtieth year the Gospel only says: "And He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them." (*Luke ii. 51.*)

When Jesus was thirty years old "came John the Baptist preaching in the desert of Judea, and saying: Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (*Matt. iii. 1.*) The words of the Precursor were mightily sustained by the austerity and sanctity of his life, and many came to be baptized by him. Jesus also came from Nazareth to receive baptism. "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan, unto John, to be baptized by him. But John stayed Him, saying: I ought to be baptized by Thee, and comest Thou to me? And Jesus answering, said to him: Suffer it to be so now: for so it becometh us to fulfil all justice. Then he suffered him. And Jesus being baptized, forthwith came out of the water; and lo the heavens were opened to Him: and He saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him. And behold a voice from heaven say-

ing: This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (*Matt.* iv.)

After His baptism Jesus retired into the desert and fasted forty days and forty nights to prepare Himself for His mission. Then He permitted satan to tempt Him repeatedly; for He wished to be our example in all things, and allowed Himself to be tempted that we might learn from Him how to struggle against and overcome temptation.

Then "Jesus came into Galilee preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, and saying: The time is accomplished and the Kingdom of God is at hand: repent and believe in the Gospel." (*Mark* i. 14, 15.) By these words our divine Redeemer announced the purpose of His sublime mission to mankind. Thenceforth Jesus proceeded through Galilee, Judea and Samaria, preaching His doctrine. He taught everywhere—in hamlets, towns, and cities, in the fields and on the hills, before thousands and before few, before His disciples and before His enemies, the pharisees and the scribes. His doctrine comprised everything that we must believe, hope, and do to attain salvation. Its contents and the persuasive power of His preaching were of themselves evidence of their truth to every unprejudiced mind. Humanly speaking, it was inexplicable how the knowledge of so pure and sublime a doctrine, and one hitherto never propounded, could be proclaimed by one known as "the carpenter's son" (*Matt.* xiii. 55), and who had no special training as teacher.

And the language in which He announced His sublime and mystical maxims was always plain and familiar, mostly in the form of parables, which appealed to the multitudes who came to hear Him.

The entire ministry of Jesus was an uninterrupted series of proofs of His love for mankind, and fraught with the blessings of His benevolence. He consoled and aided the poor, relieved the suffering and healed the sick. The halt, the blind and those tormented by the evil spirit sought His help and were cured by a word of His mouth. Even public sinners experienced His charity, as is attested by the story of Zacheus the toll-gatherer, of the adulteress, of Magdalen, and by the accusation made against Him that He was a friend of the publicans and sinners. He said of them: "They that are whole need not the physician, but they that are sick." (*Luke* v. 31.) He likened Himself to a good shepherd who seeks the lost sheep amid the thorns and brambles, and bears it back to the flock. Meeting the widow of Naim following her only son to the grave, He was so filled with compassion that, of His own accord, He raised the dead youth to life and returned him to his mother. Far from being annoyed at the number of suffering people who flocked to Him, He invited them lovingly: "Come to me, all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you." (*Matt.* xi. 28.) When mothers brought their children to Him, He fondly embraced the

little ones, and laying His hands on them, blessed them, saying to His disciples: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God." (*Mark* x. 14.) Even obdurate Jerusalem was dear to His heart, and He wept over it, saying: "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered together thy children as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldst not." (*Matt.* xxiii. 37.)

If love engenders love it ought to be expected that they who were so fortunate as to know Jesus would be filled with love and gratitude toward Him. But alas, there were hearts that were unmoved by all these proofs of His great love, there were men who even hated and persecuted Him. Instead of recognizing Him by the miracles He wrought before their eyes as the Son of God, they ascribed them to the power of the devil, and sought by all means to destroy Him. They spied out His words and deeds wherever He was, in order to convict Him of breaking the law: but to no avail; they could find nothing of which to accuse Him. When Jesus asked them: "Which of you can convince me of sin?" (*John* viii. 46) they could not answer. Even their lies and calumnies availed them nothing, for Jesus walked openly before the people. Therefore nothing was left to them but to resort to violence, and their malice prompted them to seek His life.

The fiercest enemies of Jesus were the scribes and pharisees. Some of them were high priests and belonged to the Synedrium, or high council. They expected of the Messiah that He would establish a great worldly kingdom, and when Jesus spoke only of penance, self-denial, humility, and renunciation; when they saw that He Himself walked in the paths of lowliness and led a life of austerity; when He publicly denounced their hypocrisy and self-assertion, and opposed their pernicious influence on the people, their hearts were filled with the most bitter hatred.

When Jesus, in Bethany near Jerusalem, raised Lazarus from the grave in which he had been buried four days, and by this miracle caused a great many Jews to believe in Him, their fury knew no bounds; they took counsel together under the plea of guarding the people's welfare and resolved to put Him to death. They were confirmed in their nefarious purpose when, soon thereafter, Our Lord made His solemn entrance into Jerusalem, meekly sitting astride the foal of an ass, as the prophet had foretold. "A great multitude, that was come to the festival day, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm-trees and went forth to meet Him, and cried: Hosanna, blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord, the king of Israel." (*John* xii. 12, 13.) Witnessing this triumph of Jesus, "the pharisees said among themselves: Do you see that we prevail nothing? Behold,

the whole world is gone after Him." (*John* xii. 19.)

Thus far the enemies of Our Lord had been restrained from executing their plot against His life by the fear of the people; but now the nefarious malice of one of His disciples urged them on. Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve apostles whom Jesus had selected as His intimate followers and companions, a few days before the feast of the Passover declared himself willing to betray his divine Lord and Master for the small sum of thirty pieces of silver.

Jesus, knowing that the time was at hand for Him to suffer and die, resigned Himself to the will of His Heavenly Father. After eating the paschal lamb with His apostles according to the precept of the law, "He took bread, and blessed, and broke, and gave to His disciples, and said: Take ye and eat: This is my body. And taking the chalice, He gave thanks, and gave to them, saying: Drink ye all of this. For this is my blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins." (*Matt.* xxvi. 26-28.) Thus Jesus instituted the blessed sacrament of the Eucharist, in which He gives Himself truly and essentially to us under the appearance of bread and wine for the food of our souls.

After the Last Supper Jesus continued for some time to address His apostles in words of infinite love. He promised to send them the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth, who would teach them all

things, and would abide with them for all time to come. He told Judas that he would betray Him, and Peter that he would deny Him thrice before the cock crowed twice. Rising from the supper, the traitor departed to effect his sacrilegious purpose. "And a hymn being said, they went out to Mount Olivet." (*Matt.* xxvi. 30.) "Then Jesus came with them into a country place which is called Gethsemani, and He said to His disciples: Sit you here till I go yonder and pray. And taking with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, He began to grow sorrowful and to be sad. Then He saith to them: My soul is sorrowful even unto death: stay you here and watch with me. And going a little further, He fell upon His face, praying, and saying: My Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." (*Matt.* xxvi. 36-40.) "As He yet spoke, behold Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the ancients of the people." (*Matt.* xxvi. 46-47.) "But they, holding Jesus, led Him to Caiphias, the high priest, where the scribes and the ancients were assembled. . . . And the chief priests and the whole council sought false witness against Jesus, that they might put Him to death." (*Matt.* xxvi. 59.) "Then they did spit in His face and buffeted Him, and others struck His face with the palms of their hands." (*Matt.* xxvi. 67.) "And they brought Him bound to Pontius Pilate,

the governor. . . . And Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked Him, saying: Art Thou the king of the Jews? Jesus saith to him: Thou sayest it. And when He was accused by the chief priests and ancients, He answered nothing, . . . so that the governor wondered exceedingly. Now upon the solemn day the governor was accustomed to release to the people one prisoner, whom they would; and he had then a notorious prisoner that was called Barabbas. They therefore being gathered together, Pilate said: Whom will you that I release to you: Barabbas, or Jesus that is called Christ? For he knew that for envy they had delivered Him. . . . But they said Barabbas. Pilate saith to them: What shall I do, then, with Jesus that is called Christ? They say all: Let Him be crucified. The governor said to them: Why, what evil hath He done? But they cried out the more, saying: Let Him be crucified. And Pilate, seeing that he prevailed nothing, but that rather a tumult was made: taking water, washed his hands before the people, saying: I am innocent of the blood of this just man: look you to it. And the whole people answering, said: His blood be upon us, and upon our children. Then he released to them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, delivered Him unto them to be crucified. Then the soldiers of the governor, taking Jesus into the hall, gathered together unto Him the whole band, and stripping Him, they put a scarlet cloak about Him. And

plattig a crown of thorns, they put it upon His head, and a reed in His right hand. And bowing the knee before Him, they mocked Him, saying: Hail, king of the Jews. And spitting upon Him, they took the reed and struck His head. And after they had mocked Him, they took off the cloak from Him, and put on His own garments, and led Him away to crucify Him." (*Matt. xxvi. and xxvii.*)

Meanwhile, "Judas who betrayed Him, seeing that He was condemned, repenting himself, brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and ancients, saying: I have sinned in betraying innocent blood. But they said: What is that to us? Look thou to it. And casting down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed, and went and hanged himself with a halter." (*Matt. xxvii. 3-5.*)

Then Jesus, bearing the heavy cross, was led to Calvary, where He was to suffer the worst punishment His enemies could inflict. Two malefactors, who were about to undergo the just penalty of their crimes, were led out with Him. Whilst Jesus stood meekly awaiting the completion of the arrangements for His execution, a draught of wine mingled with myrrh was offered to Him according to custom. Our Lord put His lips to the cup, that He might taste of its bitterness, then refused to drink. Now He was stripped of His garments, and thus being ready for the sacrifice, He was thrown upon the cross,

and the cruel deed of crucifixion began. His hands and feet were relentlessly pierced with nails and fastened to the cross. In these excruciating torments He remained silent and uncomplaining. Jesus, after being nailed to the cross, was raised aloft on it, and His bleeding, torn form appeared high above the heads of the multitude, a spectacle to angels and men.

Jesus, having faithfully accomplished the work appointed for Him by His Heavenly Father, now gathered all His remaining strength to utter a last farewell. "And Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said: Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit. And saying this, He gave up the ghost. Now the centurion, seeing what was done, glorified God, saying: Indeed, this was a just man. And all the multitude of them that were come together to that sight, and saw the things that were done, returned, striking their breasts." (*Luke xxiii. 46-48.*)

Since Jesus had now fully accomplished the purpose for which He came into the world, the hands of His enemies were never again to be laid on Him. "The soldiers therefore came, and they broke the legs of the first, and of the other that was crucified with Him. But after they were come to Jesus, when they saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers with a spear opened His side, and immediately there came out blood and water." (*John xix. 32-34.*)

The piercing of the side of Jesus is explained by the doctors of the Church as containing a mystical meaning. According to them, the water issuing from that wound represents the water of baptism, by which we are cleansed from sin; and by the blood that flowed therefrom we are reminded of the precious Blood which nourishes our soul in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. Hence, the holy Fathers conclude that the Church issued from the side of the dead Redeemer as Eve issued from the side of the sleeping Adam; for in baptism the Church originated, because without it no one can be her member; and by the Most Holy Eucharist the Church is sustained, because Holy Communion sustains and nourishes the life of grace, without which we are dead members of the Church.

“And when evening was now come (because it was the Parasceve, that is the day before the Sabbath), Joseph of Arimathea, a noble counsellor, who was also himself looking for the Kingdom of God, came and went in boldly to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. But Pilate wondered that He should be already dead. And sending for the centurion, he asked him if He were already dead. And when he had understood it by the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.” (*Mark* xv. 43-45.) “And Nicodemus also came, he who at the first came to Jesus by night, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. They took, therefore, the

body of Jesus, and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now there was in the place where He was crucified a garden, and in the garden a new sepulcher, wherein no man had been laid. There, therefore, because of the Passover of the Jews, they laid Jesus, because the sepulcher was nigh at hand." (*John* xix. 39-42.)

Mary, the mother of Jesus, John, the Beloved Disciple, Mary Magdalen and Salome assisted at the burial of Jesus, and "Joseph rolled a great stone to the door of the monument, and went his way." (*Matt.* xxvii. 60.) Not content to see Jesus in the tomb, the chief priests and pharisees remembered that He had said that He would rise again on the third day, and though they did not believe the prediction, they pretended to suspect the disciples of the attempt to steal their Master's body, and of spreading the report that He had risen. "And the next day, which followed the day of preparation, the chief priests and the pharisees came together to Pilate, saying: Sir, we have remembered that that seducer said while He was yet alive: After three days I shall rise again. Command, therefore, the sepulcher to be guarded until the third day: lest His disciples come, and steal Him away, and say to the people: He is risen from the dead, and the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said to them: You have a guard; go guard it as you know. And they departing, made the sepulcher sure, sealing

the stone and setting the guards." (*Matt.* xxvii. 62-65.)

"And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalen, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and Salome brought sweet spices, that coming they might anoint Jesus. And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came to the sepulcher, the sun being now risen. And they said one to another: Who shall roll us back the stone from the door of the sepulcher? And looking, they saw the stone rolled back. For it was very great. And entering into the sepulcher, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed with a white robe, and they were astonished. Who saith to them: Be not affrighted; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen, He is not here. Behold the place where they laid Him. But go, tell His disciples, and Peter, that He goeth before you into Galilee: there you shall see Him, as He told you." (*Mark* xvi. 1-7.)

After His resurrection Our Lord remained on earth forty days, appearing to His apostles and instructing them in the nature and use of the means of salvation which He intrusted to them for the eternal welfare of mankind. He gave them this commission: "Going, therefore, teach ye all nations: baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the

world. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be condemned." (*Matt.* xxviii. 19; *Mark* xvi. 16.)

Jesus had completed the work to accomplish which He had come down from heaven and dwelt amongst us. He had enlightened the world by His doctrine, and redeemed it by His death. He had established His Church, and commanded all to hear her. He had appointed St. Peter and his successors to govern the Church, to feed, in His name, the lambs and sheep of His fold. He had promised to assist His Church by sending her the Spirit of Truth, to abide with her to the end of ages. Nothing more remained for Him but to take possession of that throne of glory which He had left for our redemption, and to which He now was about to return.

On the fortieth day after His resurrection He assembled His apostles. "And He led them out as far as Bethania, and lifting up His hands, He blessed them. And it came to pass, whilst He blessed them, He departed from them, and was carried up to heaven." (*Luke* xxiv. 50.) The ascension of Christ took place from Mount Olivet. This mountain, having been the scene of His agony, was chosen by Him to be also the scene of His final glorification. "And the Lord Jesus, after He had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God." (*Mark* xvi. 19.)

OBJECTIONS

1. *The existence of Christ was never proved: yet Christianity is based on it.*

That Christ lived, preached, wrought miracles, was crucified and rose from the dead is a historical fact, related not only by the evangelists, but by profane writers of His day, thus by Flavius Josephus, the Jewish historian, who lived about the time of Emperor Vespasian.

Christianity is indeed based on Christ. It looks back on an existence of nineteen hundred years and by this very fact proves the historical existence of Christ, to whom it can be traced from the beginning.

Again, millions of martyrs gave testimony for Christ: men do not suffer and die for imaginary suppositions.

2. *Christ's resurrection can not be proved: it is a legend of later times.*

The evidence of the apostles as to the resurrection of Christ is undoubted; for the nature of their testimony rejects the notion of their being deceived respecting the fact. If Christ had appeared but once or twice to two or three of His disciples, and then had spoken to them only a few words, there might be reason to infer that they were deceived as to the presence of their Master. But He appeared repeatedly to them; He appeared to all the apostles, and to more than five thousand disciples at the same time; and during these repeated apparitions had lengthened con-

versations with them. The Gospel tells us that He appeared first to Magdalen to recompense her faith and love for Him; then to the pious women who came to embalm His body; after this to St. Peter, chief of the apostles; to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus, and to the eleven apostles who were assembled in a room, the doors being shut. He showed them the wounds in His hands and feet and side. "See my hands and feet, that it is myself; handle and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as you see me to have." (*Luke* xxiv. 39.) "And after eight days, again His disciples were within: and Thomas with them. Jesus cometh, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said: Peace be to you. Then He saith to Thomas: Put in thy finger hither, and see my hands, and bring hither thy hand, and put it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing. Thomas answered and said to Him: My Lord and my God. Jesus saith to Him: Because thou hast seen me, Thomas, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed." (*John* xxi. 26-29.) Having thus proved His resurrection, Our Lord explained the Scriptures to His disciples; He unfolded to them the great truths which they were to preach to the nations; He conferred on them great powers, among which was that of forgiving and retaining sins. He instructed them, He consoled and encouraged them; He foretold the persecutions that they were to meet with, and traced out

for them the line of conduct they were to pursue. To suppose that all these different interviews and these many and varied discourses were so many delusions is the highest absurdity and folly. So many details and so connected and circumstantial an account will not allow us to call in question the evidence of those who testify to all these facts.

What adds the greatest weight to the evidence of the apostles is their slowness of belief, and for this they were often reproached by Our Lord, both during His life and after His resurrection. When, a short time before His death, He foretold them, for the third time, that He would rise again from the dead, so faint was the idea they had of it that they scarcely understood what He said. It was to them a riddle which they could not unravel. When, on the very morning of the resurrection, the holy women related to them what they had seen and heard, far from believing their narration, they considered it as the result of a disordered imagination; and when, at last, they themselves beheld Him for the first time, they thought they saw a ghost. Men with minds so disposed could not, surely, be easily imposed upon; and when, at last, they became convinced of the reality of what they had so much difficulty in believing, we may rest assured that they yielded only to the clearest evidence. The apostles could not, then, be led into error regarding the fact of Christ's resurrection.

Again, the truth and certainty of Christ's res-

urrection is proved by the precaution adhibited by His enemies, who sealed His tomb and guarded it in order to prevent the taking away of the body. Finally, it is proved by the testimony of the entire Church, which is built upon the belief in Christ's resurrection: "And if Christ be not risen again, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." (1 *Cor.* xv. 14.)

Examples

THE SITES HALLOWED BY THE LIFE AND DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST

I. The Birthplace of Jesus

We condense the following from notes made during a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1899:

Bethlehem! How beautifully and majestically its first view presents itself to us! At length our eye rests on a collection of buildings, comprising two large churches and three monasteries: one each for the Franciscans, the Armenians and the Greeks. The entrance to the Franciscan monastery is very low and narrow, so that one must bow low to enter. A large door was deemed inadvisable because of the strained relations of the Armenians and Greeks with the Latins.

We arrived at the Franciscan convent at 5 P.M., and were hospitably received. After a short rest we were conducted to the old church of the Nativity, built by St. Helen. It is now, unhappily, partly in the hands of the Armenians

and Greeks, who walled up the choir and transept, and hold their services there. The nave of the church is divided by forty Corinthian stone pillars into five aisles. These pillars uphold architraves, which support the roof, which is of wood blackened by age. This church must once have been very beautiful. Remnants of the rich mosaic decorations which once covered the walls are still to be seen.

Beside this ancient church rises the present one, which is dedicated to St. Catherine. It belongs to the Catholics and is in charge of the Franciscans.

But we are drawn to the birthplace of Our Lord. Our guide, a Franciscan lay brother, furnishes us with lighted tapers. From the side aisle to the right of the old church a flight of stairs leads through dark and crooked passages cut in the rock to a chapel where St. Jerome lived during the last twenty-four years of his life. His tomb in an adjoining apartment is empty, his body having been brought to Rome. In the same apartment are also shown the tombs of St. Jerome's disciples, St. Paula and her daughter, St. Eustochium, and that of St. Eusebius of Cremona.

Another subterranean chapel is that of the Holy Innocents. Tradition tells us that when Herod ordered the slaughter of the children of Bethlehem, some mothers fled here with their children, and the latter were killed here by the soldiers.

A few steps lower and we have reached the grotto where Our Lord was born. It is an irregular rectangle, and toward the south is the spot where Our Lord was born. The manger in which the Christ-Child was laid was taken to Rome, where it is venerated in the church of S. Maria Maggiore. A white marble altar stands over the place where Christ was born, and from the ceiling are suspended fifteen lamps, which are kept burning day and night. On the floor beneath the altar table is a marble tablet showing a silver star, and an inscription in Latin, which, translated, says: "*Here Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary.*" Somewhat further on is another altar indicating the spot where the Wise Men adored the Divine Child. To the right and left of the altar of the Nativity, stairs lead to the upper church.

After performing our devotions at the birth-place of Our Lord, kissing the star, and touching it with objects of devotion to serve as souvenirs, we returned to the convent.

II. *The Grotto of Gethsemani*

The Garden of Gethsemani is situated at the foot of Mount Olivet. It is separated from the hill on which Jerusalem is built by the valley of Josaphat. This place, so often visited by Our Lord, is in charge of the Franciscans, who have converted it into a flower garden. About one hundred and sixty feet square, it is surrounded

by a wall, and entered through an iron gate. Along this wall, on the inside, are placed the Stations of the Cross. Eight olive trees still remain in the garden, and are undeniably of great age. They are said to have grown from sprouts of the trees under which Our Saviour rested, prayed and instructed His apostles. By favor of the lay brother tending the garden I was presented with several rosaries made from the kernels of olives grown there, with a few small phials of oil pressed from the olives, with some twigs cut from the branches of the ancient trees, and with flowers grown in the sacred soil.

A few steps from Gethsemani, across the way leading up to Mount Olivet, is the Grotto of Christ's Agony. It is a cave formed in the rock, and still retains its irregular natural shape. An iron gate has been placed at its entrance. It was opened to our party by the Franciscan lay brother in charge. The walls, native rock, are left in their original state. It is about twelve feet high, and lighted by a circular opening in the ceiling. Six pillars, three of which are cut out from the rock and the others built of masonry, serve as supports. The main altar stands at the end of the grotto on the spot where, tradition says, Our Lord suffered His agony and bloody sweat.

Beneath, costly lamps are kept burning continually, and shed their light on a tablet bearing the inscription: "Here His sweat became as drops

of blood trickling down upon the ground." (*Luke xxii. 44.*)

The place where the apostles slept during Our Lord's agony is indicated by a flat rock opposite the entrance of Gethsemani. A few feet from it to the south is the place where Judas gave the treacherous kiss to his Master, and where the band of soldiers and the servants of the priests took Jesus and bound Him, and where the soldiers fell to the ground when He spoke to them before delivering Himself up to them of His own will.

III. The Way of the Cross in Jerusalem

Nowhere in all the world can we meditate on the details of the sufferings of Our Divine Redeemer with greater attention than when passing along the *Via Dolorosa*, following Our Lord on the way He trod when going to His death.

From Gethsemani the Way of the Cross leads to the site of the house of Annas, the high priest, winding along the east side of the Brook of Cedron, and crossing the lower of the two bridges that span it. Then passing the temple place on the south, it leads up to Mount Sion. It is the very way Our Lord took when going from the Last Supper to Mount Olivet. According to tradition, Jesus, when He crossed the bridge, fell, and the impression of His knee is still shown in one of the stones. The spot where once stood the house of Annas is now the site of an Armenian convent. In a side chapel of the church

belonging to this convent is shown the place where Our Saviour was imprisoned till Annas admitted Him. The place where the house of Caiphas stood, not far distant, is also occupied by an Armenian church and convent. There the scribes and pharisees assembled to seek false witness against Our Lord, in order to have Him condemned to death. To the south is a small enclosure, the place where Jesus remained during the night of His passion. A spot in the west is indicated as the one where St. Peter denied Our Lord.

The road now leads down Mount Sion to the house of Pilate. It passes through a great part of the city and terminates at the northwestern side of the temple place at the house of Pilate, now the site of the Turkish barracks. In its wall is still to be seen the place where the stairs leading up to the governor's dwelling ended. The stairs were brought to Rome, where they are venerated in the church of the *Scala Santa*, near the Lateran Basilica.

Herod's house was distant about thirty paces from that of Pilate. The place is marked by the ruins of a church once standing there. The place of Christ's scourging is marked by the Chapel of the Flagellation. It is surrounded by a high wall and entered by a narrow door. A number of lamps are kept burning before the main altar, which occupies the spot where the pillar of scourging stood. A marble tablet in the altar re-

minds the pilgrim that "Here Christ was scourged."

Opposite, and a little beyond the Chapel of Flagellation, is the place where Our Lord was crowned with thorns. It is occupied by a square building surmounted by a cupola, which seems to have once been a chapel. A stone arch crossing the street, now partly enclosed by the church of the Sisters of Our Lady of Sion, and forming the upper part of its main altar, is called the *Ecce Homo Arch*, and is regarded as the place where Pilate exhibited Our Lord after the scourging, crowned with thorns and clad in a purple robe, with the words, "Behold the Man."

In the court of Pilate's house, now the Turkish Barracks, begins the *Way of the Cross*.

The First Station. The Franciscans perform the devotion of the Way of the Cross publicly every Friday afternoon. Kneeling in the barracks' court, the prayers of the First Station, "*Jesus is condemned to death*," are recited by the Father leading in the ceremonies. Jews, Turks, and Arabs were gathered around us when we performed our devotions, but behaved very decently and made no attempt to distract our attention. It is said that formerly it was rather difficult to gain permission to enter the courtyard, but now it is readily granted.

The Second Station, where *Jesus was laden with the cross*, is made near the *Ecce Homo Arch*, mentioned above.

The Third Station is reached after proceeding west about two hundred and fifty paces, at the meeting of the street with the one leading from the Damascus Gate. A Latin inscription indicates it as the place where *Jesus fell for the first time* under the weight of the cross.

The Fourth Station, the spot where Our Lord bearing His cross *met His Blessed Mother*, is about forty paces from there toward the south, where a steep and narrow street leads to Calvary. It is indicated by a mark on the wall of one of the houses.

The Fifth Station, where *Simon of Cyrene was compelled to assist* in carrying the Redeemer's cross, was marked a few years ago by a small altar in a niche built in the wall of a house, and by a picture illustrating the occurrence.

The Sixth Station, *Veronica wipes the face of Jesus*, is about ninety paces further on. It is marked by the fragment of a pillar embedded in the street.

The Seventh Station, at the place where *Jesus fell the second time*, is at the Gate of Judgment, now closed, but marked by an inscription as the gate through which condemned criminals were formerly led to the place of execution.

The Eighth Station, where *Jesus consoled the weeping women of Jerusalem*, is marked by an inscription on the wall of a house.

The Ninth Station, where *Jesus fell the third time*, is reached by turning south and descending

twenty steps, because the former thoroughfare is blocked up at this point. The spot of Our Redeemer's third fall is marked by a broken pillar.

The Last Five Stations, Jesus is stripped of His garments, is nailed to the cross, dies on it, is taken down from it, and buried, are all within the church of the Holy Sepulcher. To reach it we had to descend the steps just mentioned, turn back several streets, and at last enter a narrow doorway, which brought us to the space immediately surrounding the church. With feelings of unspeakable reverence and awe we finally concluded our devotions before the holy Sepulcher of Our Lord.

During our devotions we met a great number of Russian pilgrims, some of whom joined us. Others visited, praying and singing, the various sanctuaries by the way. They were mostly people of the poorer classes, whose lively faith impelled them to undergo the hardships of the long voyage from their country and to travel on foot all through the Holy Land. The Russian Government furnishes free transportation to them on board of ship.

It may be well to remark that although the identity of many of these sacred places can not be proved beyond criticism, yet the tradition of centuries is in favor of their authenticity. For the practical purpose which should be the pilgrim's main object, it is sufficient to know that

in a general way he is on the very scenes hallowed by the footsteps and sufferings of his Redeemer.

IV. *The Holy Sepulcher*

The church of the Holy Sepulcher comprises Calvary and the site of Christ's resurrection. Going southward, we pass a courtyard paved with stone slabs, through rows of venders of articles of devotion, and enter the portal of the church.

The first object that meets our eyes is the *Stone of Unction*, a slab of pink marble, which covers the place where Joseph and Nicodemus prepared Our Lord's body for burial. This stone is kissed by all the faithful entering and leaving the church.

To the right of the entrance, only a few steps from the Stone of Unction, is Mount Calvary, rising about thirty feet above the pavement of the church. Two stairs of eighteen steps lead up to it. Above there are two marble chapels, divided by an arched passageway. One of these chapels marks the spot where Jesus was raised on the cross, suffering and dying for us. It is called the Chapel of the Exaltation of the Cross. It belongs to the Greeks, and is continuously lighted by numerous lamps. The spot where the cross stood is marked by a round opening in the pavement, above which rises an altar. Pilgrims here prostrate to kiss the place. The openings in which stood the crosses of the two thieves are

marked by two black stones. They form a triangle with the place where Our Saviour's cross stood, being set back of it on either side. Between the place of the cross of Our Lord and that of the thief to the left there is a rift in the rock caused by the earthquake at the time of Our Saviour's death. It is wide enough to permit one's hand being placed in it. The other chapel marks the site of Calvary and belongs to the Latins. It is called the Chapel of the Crucifixion, for here it was where Jesus was nailed to the cross. A strip of mosaic indicates the place. A little to the west is the place where Our Lord was stripped of His garments and tasted gall and vinegar. It is marked by a disc in the marble pavement. A pillar of masonry separates the two chapels on Calvary. Here a small altar, dedicated to the Mother of Sorrows, indicates the place where Mary stood beneath the cross and where Our Lord spoke to St. John the words: "Behold thy mother!" A smaller chapel south of and a little lower than that of the Crucifixion marks the place where Mary and St. John witnessed the cruel nailing to the cross. It belongs to the Latins.

Descending Calvary, and turning to the right, we have before us the Chapel of the Holy Sepulcher and a number of smaller chapels. Nearest to Calvary is the Chapel of Scorn, called thus because a piece of the pillar on which Our Lord sat when He was crowned with thorns and derided

by the soldiery. The next chapel is that of St. Helen. It is for the most part hewn out of the rock, and lies below the level of the church of the Holy Sepulcher. A great number of lamps are kept burning there day and night. Thirteen steps to the east take the pilgrim to the Chapel of the Finding of the Cross. It contains a beautiful altar with a statue of St. Helen embracing the cross. The place where the cross was found is marked by a cross carved in a marble tablet. Two other chapels are those of the Division of Christ's Garments and of the Prison where Our Lord was held captive whilst the preparations for the crucifixion were being made. Toward the north of the church, to the left, at the end of the choir, there is an altar of St. Magdalen, on the spot where Our Lord appeared to her after His resurrection. Opposite is the Chapel of the Apparition, where Jesus appeared to His Blessed Mother after His resurrection. It belongs to the Latins, and is the starting point of the procession visiting, with hymns and prayers, every day, all the sanctuaries of the church of the Holy Sepulcher. In a niche near the entrance a part of the Pillar of the Flagellation is piously preserved. In this chapel the Blessed Sacrament is kept.

Coming from this chapel, we see before us a great rotunda, surrounded by eighteen massive pillars bearing a grand cupola. Beneath this cupola, which admits the light, is the Chapel of the Resurrection of Our Lord containing the Holy

Sepulcher. It is six feet long and ten feet wide and covered with richly carved white marble. It is entered in the east by a door so low that one can pass through it only by stooping. The stone on which the body of Our Lord was laid is about six feet in length and raised from the ground about three feet. It is covered with marble. The Latins, Greeks, and Armenians use it as an altar, where they offer up the Holy Sacrifice every day. Fifteen lamps, suspended from the ceiling, are always kept burning by the different rites. Above this sacred spot is a picture embossed in silver representing the resurrection. Before it four lamps of great value are always burning. Only four persons at a time can find room in the chapel. I had the privilege of offering up the Holy Sacrifice here on the morning of March 8, 1899.

V. The Site of Our Lord's Ascension

About midway up Mount Olivet, in the neighborhood of a few Turkish houses, is the Chapel of Our Lord's Ascension. It is, alas, long ago the property of the Mohammedans. The chapel is an octagon, and quite bare. It is surmounted by an open cupola. Just beneath this opening there is a stone in the pavement, on which is shown the impression of Our Lord's left foot, made at the moment when He left this earth. The impression of the right foot was removed by the Turks, who took that part of the stone which contains it to the mosque of Acre. Only once a year, on the feast

of Our Lord's Ascension, the Franciscans enjoy the privilege of celebrating Mass in this chapel. At other times it depends on the good will of the Turkish custodian of the place, which, however, may easily be gained by a generous *backshish*, or fee. I was the only priest of our party who celebrated Mass in this chapel. The requisites, such as altar-stone, vestments, etc., were most obligingly furnished by the nuns of a neighboring convent.

Returning from the scene of the ascension, we took a southerly course and visited this convent to thank the good Sisters for their courtesy. They are Carmelites. In the court of their convent is a beautiful chapel with an artistic cloister, which has on its walls thirty-two marble tablets, each one inscribed with the *Our Father* in a different language. Tradition points to this place as the spot where Our Lord taught His disciples to pray.



THE AGONY OF OUR LORD IN THE GARDEN

*“ Father, if Thou wilt, remove this chalice from Me, but
yet not My will, but Thine be done.”*

CHAPTER II

Deductions from the Life of Jesus

STATING the historical fact: "Nineteen hundred years ago there lived in Palestine a man called Jesus of Nazareth, surnamed Christ, who caused a great sensation, and was crucified," we need not fear contradiction from either Christian, Jew, Mohammedan, or infidel. The fact is undeniable.

Inquiring then: Why was Christ crucified? the answer given alike by Christian, Jew, Mohammedan, and infidel will be: "He was crucified because He called Himself God and the Redeemer of the world."

The reason why Christ was crucified is an incontrovertible fact even when considered independently of the statement of Scripture. Now there arises the further question: "Was Jesus Christ crucified justly or not?" The correct answer to this question decides everything. In His sermons to the people, before the priests and scribes, to all the world, Christ declared Himself as one with the Father, as God, as the Son of God, as the Judge of the living and the dead. Thereby He claimed what belongs to God alone. Yet, questioned in court in the name of the living God, under the sacred obligation of an oath, He declared that He was God, the Son of God, the

promised Messiah and Redeemer of the world. For this He was condemned to death. He knew how His testimony was received; He knew that He was regarded as a criminal who, by claiming divinity, attempted to set up a false religion, to introduce idolatry, and that He was, for this reason, condemned to death. And yet He did not retract His assertion. He was condemned and died upholding it, praying even on the cross to His Heavenly Father to pardon His persecutors, and commending His Spirit into His hands. Thus He dies—a victim of His declaration.

These *facts* are incontrovertible: nobody can deny them. Now, did Christ tell the truth? Yes or no! If He told the truth, then we must adore Him as the Son of God, believe in Him as Truth unfailing, love Him as the incarnation of Love infinite. If He told the truth our faith is firmly established, our hope secure, for now He reigns forever in heaven. If He did not tell the truth, there are only two alternatives: Either He knowingly asserted a falsehood and arrogated to Himself what belongs only to God, thus wilfully defrauding His disciples and all His followers of their eternal hopes by mendaciously calling Himself the Redeemer of the world. If this be the case, He did what no other false prophet ever attempted; He did what the greatest criminal and impostor known to the world never dared. What, then, remains for us but to turn away from Him with the greatest abhorrence? Or

He *imagined* that He was the Son of God; God, the Redeemer of the world, and this His conceit controlled His whole life, pervaded His entire doctrine, so that no opposition, no contradiction was able to persuade Him to give it up. Even His terrible sufferings, the painful scourging, the terrible crowning with thorns, the excruciating nailing to the cross, the inexpressible sufferings on it could not induce Him to retract. In this case He was mentally irresponsible, incurably insane, and a crime was perpetrated on a man who was deserving of the greatest pity, a crime unequalled in history. Either the most disgraceful fraud or incurable insanity are the alternatives left to those who do not believe in Christ's divinity.

And what are the logical deductions of this admission? They are: For nineteen centuries this gigantic fraud, this most enormous crime against mankind, produced innumerable saints; this incurable insanity was the source of all culture, science and art, in which the Christian nations unquestionably surpass all others.

Whosoever denies the divinity of Christ must first deny the nineteen centuries of Christianity; or he must concede that sanctity has its source in the utmost depravity, and that wisdom is engendered by imbecility. Secondly, he must discard, together with Christianity and its achievements, reason itself; for he can not deny that the most cultured nations, those that achieved the

most remarkable progress in all things pertaining to true culture, believed in the divinity of Christ, and by this their faith raised themselves from the lowest stages of barbarism to the pinnacle of civilization. Has mankind, then, permitted itself to be swayed and influenced for nineteen centuries by a gigantic imposture or by insane imbecility? If so, where is the function of human reason?

Whosoever denies Christ's divinity is compelled to disavow human reason, and with it all regard for virtue and truth, for science and art, for mankind at large and for all its achievements. Hence a person who loves truth and acknowledges the logic of these deductions will find it impossible to deny the divinity of Christ.

Turning to the consideration of Christ's personality, we must confess: If God can appear in human form—and who can deny this?—He can not appear in a more godly, more holy, more amiable and wise manner than is embodied in Christ's person. Even Strauss, the atheist, after writing volumes against the doctrines of Christianity, was compelled to admit: "Even if we rob Christ's brow of the crown of divinity, He still retains His title to the first place in the temple of genius and humanity as the ideal of human greatness." In other words: Though I am not pleased to acknowledge Christ's divinity, I am nevertheless compelled to confess that He is the

holiest of men, whose like was hitherto never found.

Acknowledging this, reason compels the question: How is this moral excellence compatible with the basest deceit or with the vagaries of imbecility? Indeed, to be an unbeliever it is necessary to be very credulous!

Proceeding to investigate Christ's doctrine, we will find that it confirms His claim to divinity. The doctrine of Christ comprises articles of faith and precepts of morality; in other words, it relates to that which we must believe and to that which we must do.

The dogmatic doctrine of Christ, embodying what we must believe, was ever since its promulgation the object of attacks and incriminations. Why? There are two reasons. The dogmas of the Christian religion concern God and our relations to Him. The human intellect can form no true conception of God; hence its pride is offended at His incomprehensibility and refuses to believe. "The fool hath said in his heart: there is no God." (*Ps. xiii. 1.*)

The main reason, however, for the attacks made on Christianity is its moral doctrine. Its opponents are not candid enough to humbly confess: "I will not *believe* in Christianity, for if I did I should be obliged to *live* in a Christian manner. This I do not wish to do, therefore I will not believe." They "take off their hat" to Christ and compliment Him as the "Wise

Teacher of Nazareth," the "great Benefactor of the human race," the "Moral Reformer of mankind," just as the soldiers in the pretorium of Pilate mocked Christ, crowning Him with thorns, clothing Him in purple rags and greeting Him as the King of the Jews. They do not give expression to their hatred of Christian morality except by their attacks on Christian dogma. It may be truly said that there is not a single point of Christian faith that was not at one time or another the subject of assault. Nevertheless, the dogmas of Christianity have remained the belief of the greatest nations of the earth to this day.

And where are the champions of infidelity, who imagined that by their efforts Christianity would fail? They have vanished and are forgotten; their books are the only monuments of their folly. And their followers of to-day will share the same fate.

The continuous attacks on the Faith sometimes cause doubts in well-disposed persons. They imagine that, after all, something must be amiss with Christianity, because so much is done, said and written against it. Just the reverse is true: Because it is invulnerable, it is attacked so furiously. Everybody understands why, for instance, Port Arthur was besieged so long: not because it was weak and poorly garrisoned, but because it was strong and well defended.

Let our enemies discover a flaw in the doctrine of Christianity and we shall surrender. Let them

prove erroneous a single dogma and we shall surrender them all. For if God, if Christ had deceived us in a single point, He would no longer deserve belief in the rest. Therefore, enemies of Christ, point out a flaw! You can not do it: it never was and never shall be done. So, then, let the battle continue!

Let us now take up the question: Whence had Christ His doctrine, His wisdom? His doctrine came from heaven: its truth and its effects prove it. History relates the exertions made by the great teachers of antiquity to create a real, stable system of philosophy. But compare the best of their age—a Plato, an Aristotle, and others—with Christ! Did Plato succeed in turning away the people of his time from idolatry and its superstitions? And yet his nation was the most cultured one and his ideas of deity and the creation of the world were most sublime. Did the other great pagan philosophers succeed in converting a single follower from the worship of idols to the knowledge of the true God? Christ, on the contrary, led millions and millions to the religion which sanctifies, elevates and consoles.

In addition to His doctrine, He left us His example. His whole life is a reflection of divine attributes and of holiness. His very appearance suggests godliness, sanctity, nobility of purpose, wisdom.

The miracles which He performed are an unmistakable evidence of His divinity, of His dom-

ination over nature. True, some people deem it their duty to smile at the mention of miracles, in order to appear "cultured." They really deserve pity. A miracle is an act possible only to God, an exclusively divine act, one that can not be done by a creature.

In nature everything is ordered by gradation. The animal does many things that can not be done by plants. For instance, the animal moves from place to place; the plant does not. Again, man performs many actions that can not be done by the brute creation. Now God, being the supreme Lord of nature, is not bound by its laws, except in so far as He wills it. If He has the power to cause the grain of seed put in the soil to grow and produce its kind, why should He not be able to cause reproduction without the medium of earth and air? Whence came the first grain of seed if not by divine creation? If God breathed life into the slime of the earth and thus created man, why should He not be able to restore life to a dead man? Nature can not do it; the power to do so belongs to the Almighty, and if He uses it He does nothing that is inconsistent with any of His attributes. For instance, by the resuscitation of Lazarus Christ did not disturb the laws of nature; the resuscitation was not a suspension of the divine order established in the world: men still die as formerly, not all the dead rise from the grave like Lazarus. God remains the same as ever after creating the world and

establishing its laws. He continues the Almighty Lord of all His works.

If, then, everybody who believes in the existence of God must concede the possibility of miracles, we come to the question: Did God, did Christ really perform miracles or did He not? Did Christ perform them by His own power? If He did, He is God. If He performed them by the invocation of God's name and help, He thereby proves Himself God's messenger. The historical truth of Christ's miracles stands unchallenged; it is attested and verified both by the Jews and the pagans, although it was their interest to deny them. The Jews acknowledged Christ's miracles as such. After the resuscitation of Lazarus the high priest convoked the Synedrium and addressed the members as follows: "What do we, for this man doth many miracles? If we let Him alone so, all will believe in Him." (*John* xi. 47, 48.) Would it not have been easier to explain the miracles as unknown forces of nature, or to deny them outright? But no, the members of the Synedrium dared not; their only solution of the question was the crucifixion of Christ.

The pagan philosophers, among them Julian the Apostate, the emperors Celsus and Porphyrius, and others, never doubted the historical truth of Christ's miracles; nor did they attempt to explain them as natural phenomena. They were content to say: "He performed them by magic

and sorcery," just as the Jews had ascribed them to the power of Beelzebub, the chief of devils. Hence there is nothing left to him who admits the testimony of contemporary witnesses but to consider Christ's miracles as divine operations or to regard them as manifestations of the spirits of darkness.

Let us make a proposition: In this our twentieth century, when physiology, natural history, and kindred sciences are so far advanced, let us invite the scientists to select, according to choice, some miracle, and to prove that it was accomplished by natural forces—but under the one condition that they repeat it, as professors of natural philosophy and chemistry prove their demonstrations by experiments, in order to show that what was done by nature can be achieved also by science. We may rest assured that the learned gentlemen shall not perform a miracle, for it is certain that even to-day Christ's miraculous multiplication of loaves or the healing of the sick can not be accomplished by mere exercise of the will. Briefly, the miracles in the Gospel *are* miracles because they transcend the powers of nature.

Thus has Christ proved Himself God, the Lord of creation. But what scandalizes so many is His ignominious death upon the cross. "How can I believe that a God permitted Himself to be crucified?" When speaking of Christ's death on the cross we must preclude all reference to His

deity. It never was a Christian doctrine that Christ suffered in His divine nature; He suffered only in His human nature. This fact alters the situation completely: the divine person of Christ suffered in a human body and human soul. His divine person was susceptible of suffering as *man*, and this His suffering became of infinite value because He is *God*: in this manner alone, as God-man, it was possible for Christ to accomplish the redemption of mankind.

We are filled with awe while contemplating the infinite love of God who by His own free will was thus condescending: but this His act does not impair His divinity. On the contrary, it is an evidence that God is not only the Almighty, All-wise, All-just and Most Holy Being, but also Infinite Love, Infinite Mercy; and in addition to trembling before Him who is Our Lord and God, our heart is drawn toward Him by love; for our conception of the true God was not impaired by our belief in His incarnation, passion, and death. Only since we have adored the God-man dying on the cross was He acknowledged, worshiped, and loved by the whole world.

The condescension of God's love toward us is truly infinite, and by it alone are we raised to our high dignity. It saves countless human souls, created in the image of God, for all eternity, to praise and glorify Him forever. Christ's abasement is at the same time His glorification. *His* condescension is *our* salvation and *His* glory for

all eternity. Viewed thus there is no contradiction in the suffering and death of the God-man.

Behold, then, the scandal of the cross! Seeing Christ ascending Calvary, loaded with all the crimes of mankind, covered with blood, torn from the crown of His head to the sole of His feet, you may learn what you deserve for your sins, and how great is your guilt and misery. But also beholding Him going like a lamb to the shambles without opening His mouth; hearing Him plead, "Father, forgive them!"—do you not then hear the voice of divine mercy and love? Indeed, we must confess: Christ dies as only a God-man can die. Everything in and about Him shows us, on the one hand, the infinite perfection of God, and on the other, our supreme misery. Christ's atoning death effected our reconciliation. Christ is the fulfilment of God's promises to man, and of man's hope of salvation.

On the third day Christ, by His own power, rose from the dead, as He had foretold. His resurrection was the divine confirmation of His doctrine, the corroboration of His work of redemption, the evidence and proof of His divinity. *His* resurrection differs from the future resurrection of mankind in this: He rose by His own power, and came forth from the *sealed* tomb in His glorified body with which He had united His soul. Hence Holy Scripture says not only that He was raised from the dead, but that He *rose* from the tomb. Of *our* resurrection Christ says:

"And He shall send His angels with a trumpet, and a great voice: and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest parts of the heavens to the utmost bounds of them." (*Matt.* xxiv. 31.) And St. Paul writes: "Behold I tell you a mystery: We shall all indeed rise again, but we shall not all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet: for the trumpet shall sound, and we shall rise again incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (*1 Cor.* xv. 51.)

After Christ had convinced His disciples of the reality of His resurrection by appearing to them repeatedly for forty days, He ascended by His own power into heaven. He ascended for His own glory and for our salvation. For by His ascension He not only opened heaven, which had been closed by sin since Adam's fall; but He took possession of it in His human body, "Always living to make intercession for us" (*Heb.* vii. 25), there to implore His Father for mercy on those for whose sake He took human nature unto Himself.

The redemption of mankind was accomplished. Since entering His eternal glory, Christ looks upon us on earth. He witnesses the preaching and spreading of the Gospel; His heart rejoices at every good deed performed; He delights to see the acceptance of His doctrine and to witness the triumphs of His Church. He is pleased with the countless souls who follow His example of virtue

and self-denial. He welcomes every soul entering heaven, because He purchased it with His blood; and as souls continually enter heaven to enjoy His blissful company, His joy is of endless duration.

Let us, therefore, revive our courage and our fervor in His service by looking up to heaven, where our divine Saviour awaits, with infinite love, our coming.

OBJECTIONS

1. *The gospels, the source of Christ's history, deserve no credit, for they were written long after His death.*

The gospels were written during the lifetime of the apostles, and from then on were read in the Church, and cited by various writers. The four gospels are ascribed to the evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

St. Matthew was one of the twelve apostles, who from being a publican, that is, a toll-gatherer, was called by Christ to the apostleship. He was the first to write the Gospel, and wrote it in Hebrew or Syro-Chaldaic, the language then spoken in Palestine. He was an eye-witness of many of the events related by him. He wrote between the years 42 and 50; that is, between the thirteenth and twenty-third year after Christ's death. His purpose was to convince the Jews that Christ was the promised Messiah.

St. Mark, a disciple of St. Peter, wrote his gospel between the years 52 and 62. His narrative

is compiled from what he heard from St. Peter himself. It was written principally for the Christians in Rome, and was read in the whole Church by authority of St. Peter.

St. Luke was a disciple of St. Paul, and his fellow-laborer in the ministry. He wrote his gospel primarily for the converts made by the Apostle of the Gentiles. It was compiled from the statements of eye-witnesses to the events related, between the years 59 and 63.

St. John, the "Beloved Disciple," wrote his gospel about sixty-three years after Our Lord's ascension, *viz.*, between the years 96 and 98. Having been witness to the most of the facts related in his gospel, he supplied much that the other evangelists had omitted. His principal object was the refutation of the heresies that even then began to spread, by establishing the divinity of Christ.

These gospels, then, and the other books of Holy Scripture, were read at the religious meetings of the first Christians, whereby they received historical confirmation such as no other book of antiquity can claim. Moreover, ancient writers, even heretics, cite the gospels. St. Irenæus, in the second century, writes: "Because our adversaries cite the gospels, what we claim for them must be true."

These external proofs of the genuineness of the gospels are supplemented by numerous internal evidences. Thus there are certain histori-

cal incidents, from which the time of writing can be calculated, and, indeed, the whole character of the gospels is proof of their authenticity. Rousseau, the infidel, writes of them: "The gospel history a fiction? A fiction is not written in that manner. We all believe the deeds of Socrates: they are not as authenticated as those of Jesus. It is much less probable that these books were invented by many minds than that one individual was the subject of their narrative. The Jews would never have promulgated a morality like this in such a style of writing. The seal of truth impressed upon the gospels is so grand, so unmistakable, so well authenticated, that its counterfeiter would be greater than its author."

2. *The gospels relate quite a number of miracles: but miracles are impossible.*

Because there is a God, miracles *are* possible. Because Christ is God, He wrought miracles. Hence the narrative of miracles in the gospels is evidence not against them, but in their favor.

Examples

ST. ATHANASIUS

After the Council of Nice, A.D. 325, had formally condemned the heresy of Arius, who denied the divinity of Christ, his followers, by their intrigues and artifices, succeeded for a time in blinding the eyes of the Emperor Constantine as to the real import of the false doctrine. Constantius, who succeeded his father on the throne,

also favored the Arians, and during his long reign of twenty-five years disturbed the peace of the Church by persecuting the Catholic bishops. In his turn he was succeeded by Julian the Apostate, whose aim was to re-establish paganism and to destroy the Christian religion altogether. Valens, the next emperor of the East, recalled the Arian bishops, and renewed the persecution of the Catholics.

During these calamitous times the most glorious champion of the Church was the intrepid Bishop of Alexandria, St. Athanasius. Driven into exile by Constantine, and again by Constantius, a fugitive for his life during the persecution of Julian, and more than once an exile under the Emperor Valens, his episcopate of nearly forty-six years was a constant succession of hardships and afflictions, endured with heroic fortitude in defence of the Faith. At one time a wanderer in Gaul or Italy, at another in the deserts of Egypt, he continued without ceasing, both by his words and his learned writings, to encourage the faithful and to defend the true doctrine of the Incarnation against the Arians and other heretics. Neither promises nor threats, neither calumnies nor persecutions were able to discourage him or to induce him to relax his efforts in the cause of God.

In the midst of the persecutions which he had to undergo, St. Athanasius met with firm and constant support from Popes Julius and Dam-

asus. The partisans of Arius sought to deceive the Sovereign Pontiff as they had done the emperors, but their efforts were in vain. When the Arian bishops had met in council and deposed Athanasius, the Pope at once annulled their proceedings and restored him to his See. He died at an advanced age, after suffering persecution for justice' sake for forty-six years, a valiant champion of Christ and His Church, May 2, A.D. 375.

A VALIANT CHRISTIAN MOTHER

Emperor Valens was a fervent supporter of the Arian heresy, and strictly forbade the practice of the Catholic religion. The Catholics, however, heeded him not, but continued to hold their religious assemblies as before. The emperor now issued a decree commanding his soldiers to surround their meeting places, and to kill without mercy every one found there. A prefect who was not in favor of this cruel measure gave notice to the Christians to avoid the impending danger. But far from remaining away from church through fear, the Catholics flocked to it in great numbers, rejoicing at the opportunity of gaining the crown of martyrdom thus afforded them, by testifying to their faith in the divinity of Christ.

One day when the prefect, commanding a troop of soldiers, was on his way to execute the emperor's command he met a woman leading a child and showing great haste. He asked her: "Whither so fast?" She replied: "To the

church." The prefect said: "What are you about? Do you not know the emperor's command?" "Oh, yes," answered the woman; "I well know it, and for that very reason I am in such haste to share, with my child, the happiness of those who are about to suffer death for their belief in the divinity of Christ, the Son of God."

The prefect, surprised to find such heroic faith in a woman, returned to the emperor and related what had occurred; who, admiring the courage of the Catholics and their fidelity, left the city and never more molested them again.

A JEWISH WRITER ON CHRIST

In his book, "Jewish Antiquities," being a history of the Jewish people from the earliest times up to the war with the Romans, written in the first Christian century, Josephus Flavius says:

"About this time there lived a wise man, if, indeed, a man he may be called, whose name was Jesus. He was remarkable for the performance of the most stupendous deeds, and was a teacher of truth-loving men. Many Jews and Greeks adhered to him. He was the Messiah. And although Pilate, the governor, condemned him to death because of the accusation of the chief priests, his followers ceased not to love him. For on the third day he appeared to them restored to life, as the prophets of God had predicted. Even now the people called Christians after him continue to believe in him."

Josephus Flavius was no Christian when he wrote thus, and never became one. But as a historian he felt himself compelled to refer to Our Saviour, and to relate His miracles, His doctrine, and His death on the cross as well-known facts.



HOLY COMMUNION

"He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up in the last day."

CHAPTER III

Jesus Christ, the God-Man

WHAT induced the Almighty, Eternal God to invent a work so wonderful and so incomprehensible as His incarnation? The answer to this question is found in the Nicene Creed: "I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, and born of the Father before all ages. God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God; begotten, not made: consubstantial with the Father, by whom all things were made. *Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven and became incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man.*"

St. John expresses the mystery accomplished when the Blessed Virgin Mary spoke the decisive words, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to Thy word" (*Luke i. 38*), in the words, "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." (*John i. 14.*) Who is that Word which, made flesh, took human nature from Mary the Virgin? The same evangelist answers: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were

made by Him: and without Him was made nothing that was made. In Him was the life, and the life was the light of men: and the light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it." (*John* i. 1-5.)

That Word, then, who was from all eternity with God and was God Himself, the "only-begotten of the Father," the Son of God, who together with the Father and the Holy Ghost created everything that was created; this Eternal, Infinite, Almighty Word took unto His divine nature human nature, a real human body and a truly human soul, so that one and the same divine Person is truly the Son of God and truly the Son of the Virgin, true God by His divine nature and true man by His human nature. Incomprehensible mystery of divine omnipotence! Incomprehensible mystery, also, of the love and condescension of the Son of God!

The divine and the human nature are, then, united in Christ in one Person, His divine Person. This union of the two natures in Christ, moreover, is not only a moral, but a physical one; not a transient, but a continual and permanent one. In the language of the Church it is called the hypostatic union.

This dogma, which is the foundation of the Christian doctrine of redemption, is clearly stated in Holy Scripture. *Isaias* (vii. 14) calls the Child of the Virgin "God with us," and he writes: "A Child is born to us, and a Son is given to us, and

the government is upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, God, the Mighty, the Father of the world to come, the Prince of Peace." (*Is. ix. 6.*) That Jesus was the Son of God become man was explicitly declared by the angel announcing His birth to the shepherds: "This day is born to you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord." (*Luke ii. 11.*) Christ Himself said: "I and the Father are one. . . . Believe my works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in the Father." (*John x. 30, 38.*) This doctrine was always taught by the Church and defended by her against all attacks. The Athanasian Creed states it fully: "Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man. He is God, of the substance of the Father, born before all ages: and Man, of the substance of His mother, born in time. Perfect God and perfect Man, consisting of a rational soul and of human flesh. Equal to His Father, according to His divinity; less than His Father, according to His humanity. Although He is God and Man, still there are not two, but one Christ; one, not by the conversion of the divinity into flesh, but by the assumption of the humanity unto God. Perfectly one, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of Person."

This doctrine, then, consists in the following: First: In Christ, after His incarnation, the divine and human nature exist unimpaired and unmixed, together with their essential powers and opera-

tions. Secondly: Both natures are united in one Person. Thirdly: The one Person in which both these natures are united can be only the *divine* Person, because it can not cease to exist. This divine Person took unto Himself human nature. He did not, by incarnation, unite Himself with a person already existing. His human nature does not, and never did, exist totally by itself, so as to be a human person. It was assumed by Christ, and exists only in His divine person. And far from being deprived of any of its inherent perfections by this assumption, it was ineffably exalted thereby, since it is infinitely more perfect to exist as a divine than as a human person.

From the doctrine that Christ, after His incarnation, possessed two complete, unmixed, and unimpaired natures, follow a number of other essential Christian truths. It follows that Christ had a twofold *cognition*, a divine and a human one, and that He had a twofold *will*, a divine will with a divine volition, and a human will with a human volition.

From the union of these two natures in the one divine person of Christ result the following doctrines:

1. The attributes and acts of both natures may be ascribed to the one divine person. This, however, is permissible only relative to the *person of Christ*. In this sense we say correctly: God was born, suffered, died on the cross. It would be incorrect to attribute that which is proper to the

one nature of Christ to the other, because thereby the two natures would be commingled. Therefore we may not say: "His divine nature suffered" or "His human nature is almighty, or present everywhere."

2. From the hypostatic union of the two natures in Christ follows that Christ, as man, is not merely the *adopted* but the *true* Son of God, because the filiation is not attributed to the *nature*, but to the *person* of Christ.

3. From the hypostatic union of the two natures in Christ follows that divine worship and adoration is due also to the humanity of Christ: to His human body, His human soul, His human heart, His human blood; hence also to the blessed sacrament of the Eucharist; because the worship and adoration relate not to His nature, but to His person.

5. From the hypostatic union of the two natures in Christ follows that Christ in His human nature was not only without sin, but also that He was impeccable.

6. From the hypostatic union of the two natures in Christ follows that all His actions and sufferings are of infinite value and merit, because they are the actions of a God-man, and must be attributed to the divine person of Christ.

God's design, by permitting heretics to make three different attacks on this doctrine, was to establish its truth beyond question. One party attacked the divinity of Christ, another His hu-

manity, and a third the hypostatic union of the two natures in Christ. These errors were condemned in various Councils, and it was solemnly declared that Mary conceived not only a man, but the God-man; that is, the person of Jesus Christ. St. Gregory moreover observes that we are not permitted to hold the opinion that Mary conceived and gave birth only to the body of Christ, and that His divinity took its abode in it only later on. St. John Damascene writes: "This body was, from the first moment of conception, the body of the incarnate Word."

The union of the divine and human nature in the one person of Christ moreover includes in its purpose an important lesson. Its purpose was man's redemption; in other words, his reunion with God, from whom he was separated by sin. True, this union can not be one of essence; for God selected only the humanity of Christ to be thus united with Him. To effect the relation between God and man God shows him condescension, for without it it would be impossible. The means employed by God to bring about this relation is His sanctifying grace, by which man is elevated into a supernatural state; that is, into a higher state than his human nature is entitled to: to that state of justice and holiness which is essential to the union between God and man.

Another means employed by God to effect this purpose is the doctrine of our holy Faith, which

embraces the summary of divine revelation. Again, for the attainment of this purpose God grants us the so-called grace of assistance, by which He enlightens our intellect, strengthens our weakened and faltering will, and draws us to Him kindly and lovingly. It is pre-eminently by Holy Communion that man's union with God is not only sought after, but, in a certain manner, really affected here below. For by giving us His flesh and blood for the nourishment of our soul, according to St. Peter, He even now permits us to be partakers of His divinity, and at the same time prepares us for that union with God which will receive its consummation in heaven.

Thus God in His condescension seeks to bring about our union with Him without in the least coercing our liberty. Man is left free to join in this union or not. If he is willing to enter into it, he must do his part to make it effective. Whilst God, in His condescension, offers it to him, he must elevate himself by taking hold, so to say, of God's hand stretched out to him, and accepting the offer. Then he must co-operate with it, asking God's grace in frequent prayer and meditation. Hence the importance of taking to heart the eternal truths, as taught by the Church, and of making use of the means of grace which she offers to us.

By thus co-operating with God's condescending love toward us, our union with Him will become a closer one from day to day: we shall grow in per-

fection and in likeness to God, and thus attain to the end for which God became man—our eternal salvation.

OBJECTIONS

1. *The Monophysites (Eutychians) deny the hypostatic union in Christ.*

The Monophysite heresy is refuted by the above explanation of the two natures in Christ. That the human nature in Him was not absorbed by His divine nature is the logical conclusion conveyed by those scriptural passages which mention Christ's exhaustion, sleep, sorrow, suffering, and death, for all this can refer only to His human and not to His divine nature. The heresy of Eutyches was condemned by the Fourth Ecumenical Council, held at Chalcedon, A.D. 451.

2. *The Nestorians maintain that the person of the Son of God is not the same as the person of the Son of man; but that God dwelled in the Son of man as a Deity in His temple.*

This heresy was solemnly condemned by the General Council of Ephesus, A.D. 431. Nestorius, Bishop of Constantinople, who first proclaimed it and would not retract, was deposed and excommunicated. The people of Ephesus broke out into shouts of joy, and the city was illuminated at night. St. Cyril of Alexandria, who presided at the Council in the name of Pope Celestine I, had taken the chief part in exposing the heresy. Mary's claim to the title "Mother of God" was vindicated and confirmed.

3. *The Monothelites accept only one, the divine, will in Christ.*

The Fifth General Council, the Third of Constantinople, held A.D. 680, defined that there are in Christ two wills and two natural operations. The Monothelites did not question that Christ willed and operated in virtue of His divine nature, but denied His human will. Now it is plain from Scripture that Christ acted also in virtue of His human nature; for it was as a man that He prayed, preached, hungered, thirsted, suffered sorrow, etc. In His prayer, "Not my will, but Thine, be done" (*Luke* xxii. 42), He speaks of His human will; for His divine will was His Father's will. His obedience involves the submission of His human will to the divine will; for obedience is the submission of one will to another.

Example

AN APPROPRIATE EXPLANATION

It is related of an Eutychian that he one day entertained a number of his friends. The conversation turned to the subject at that time uppermost in all minds, Christ's nature. The host maintained that there is but one, the divine nature, in Christ. To illustrate his assertion he took two small iron rods, brought them to a white heat in the fire, and then welded them together. Then he said: "See here, they are now one piece. Thus also the divine and human natures united in Christ make but one nature."

A little boy in the company, who had learned his Catholic Catechism well, replied: "You committed a grievous error. If you take iron to represent the human nature, you must certainly take gold to represent the divine nature. Therefore replace one of the iron rods by one of gold, heat and weld them together. Will the metal thus welded be all gold or all iron? Or will each part remain what it was before? The same is true of Christ. In Him two natures, the divine and the human, are united in such a manner that they form not two, but only one, Person: yet His human nature was not absorbed by His divine nature. Both natures remain entirely distinct."

The Eutychian was effectually silenced.

CHAPTER IV

The Sacred Heart of Jesus—Divine and Human

EVERYWHERE the human heart is regarded as the symbol of love. Even Holy Scripture uses the word "heart" in this sense. Thus, in the Old Testament, God asks for man's love, saying: "My son, give Me thy heart." (*Prov.* xxiii. 26.) And in the New Testament Christ Himself commands: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart." (*Matt.* xxii. 37.) The Church also adopts this mode of speech; and justly so, for the heart shares most intimately in the life of the soul, in all its emotions and affections.

Hence she considers the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ as the symbol of His love, of that love which prompted Him to suffer and die for our redemption. This heart, a divine-human one, is the object of our adoration, of that highest form of worship which we offer to God alone. Because of the hypostatical union, Christ's body and soul are united in a divine Person. Adoration is due to this Person, hence also to His heart.

Therefore, whether we regard the symbol, the bodily heart of Jesus, or the object represented by the symbol, the love of Our Saviour, the worship of His divine heart appears entirely justified. At the same time the object thus presented to us

is deserving of our worship. Or can we imagine an object more worthy of our love than God's love, and the heart, divine and human, that symbolizes this love? Indeed, only ignorance of this divine heart can permit our hearts to remain obdurate and not return this love.

The worship of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, then, is founded on the basis of Christian dogma. The entire doctrine concerning Christ, the belief in His incarnation, the reality of His human nature, the adorableness of His human body, the doctrine of a twofold will in Christ—all these form the solid foundation on which rests worship of the Sacred Heart, and this worship is but a practical deduction from these fundamental Christian truths. He who denies the lawfulness of this worship destroys Christ, and is no longer a Christian. Whoever believes, in accordance with the teaching and in the sense of the Church, in the incarnation of the Son of God, must logically admit the legitimacy of this worship, and therefore approve of the devotion to the Sacred Heart.

And it is a lovely devotion indeed, one that appeals to our own heart, because it is directed toward a heart most worthy of our adoration and love. As was remarked before, its object is the real, human heart of the God-man, the noblest part of His divine-human body, which in itself is entitled to our worship because of its intimate union with His divine Person, and because it so

faithfully co-operated in the work of our redemption. This heart was active for our salvation from the manger to the cross. It is the source whence coursed the blood shed for our redemption, the well-spring from which this blood is offered up for us in the holy sacrifice of Mass. It is the heart that was overwhelmed with agony in the garden, the heart which, after ceasing its pulsation in death, was the object of a last attack, and, transfixed by the soldier's spear, shed the very last drop of its world-redeeming blood. It was, therefore, not only the instrument, but also the victim of our redemption.

There is, therefore, no more worthy and attractive object of Christian worship than the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It is the reminder of His love toward us, and of all this love has done for us. It is the emblem of a God-man's love. Who can comprehend the power, the strength, the extent and the tenderness of this love? Its every pulsation was caused by a divine affection. This love is infinite, comprehensive, embracing all mankind without exception, the just and the sinner. From the first moment of its existence this heart never wearied in providing for our welfare; its purposes were directed only to whatever was conducive to our instruction, consolation, and merit. Hence Our Saviour's lonely, hidden youth, His toilsome life during the years of His ministry, and His unutterably bitter and cruel death. Contemplate the principal events of

His life: they are all tokens of His love. For love of us He went about teaching, performing miracles, comforting the distressed, healing the sick, instructing His apostles, founding His Church, instituting the sacraments and enriching them with the treasures of His grace. It was His love that invented a new, until then unheard-of, manner of remaining with us in the Most Holy Eucharist; that after His ascension sent us the Holy Ghost; that never ceases in heaven to think of us, to care for us, and to add new benefactions to the old ones. Whatever we are and have we owe to this love. Our holy religion with its consoling mysteries, doctrines, graces, means of grace, blessings and promises—the source of all this is the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and the devotion to it is intended to remind us of these His deeds of inexhaustible love.

Therefore the devotion to the Sacred Heart is a compendium, a sketch of Our Lord's life and sufferings, a concise epitome of all the truths of faith, the union and spirit of all devotions to Our Lord. Whilst other devotions present to our consideration only one or another mystery of His life and death, the devotion to His Sacred Heart embraces them all.

Considering the great love of Our Redeemer and what it accomplished for our salvation, it would seem that all hearts would be impelled to return this love. But, alas, this is not so. The great majority of mankind does not appreciate

it, many even despise it. Therefore we must not be surprised that we are told in the history of the devotion to the Sacred Heart that Our Lord, when revealing this devotion, appeared showing His heart pierced with a wound, crowned with thorns, surmounted by a cross and surrounded by flames, saying: "Behold this heart, which so loved men and exhausted itself for them; and in return I receive the basest ingratitude." By this plaintive reminder and by the display of His wounded heart Our Saviour desires to move us to contrition, to compassion, to repentance, and love.

It is for us to respond to the pleadings of the Sacred Heart. Only he can refuse to do so who was excluded from this Heart's love, who never experienced its bounty, and who did not, by ingratitude, show himself unworthy of its benefactions. But he who experienced the effects of this Heart's love, receiving graces innumerable from it, and who was so unfortunate as to return it with neglect and indifference—let him approach this throne of grace and love; let him make reparation; let him return love for love: and opening his heart to devotion, let him join in the prayerful ejaculation of the Church:

*O sweetest Heart of Jesus, I implore
That I may ever love Thee more and more!*

OBJECTIONS

1. *Devotion to the Sacred Heart, as practised to-day, is an innovation in the Church.*

Devotion to the Sacred Heart is, in fact, as old as the Church. St. John, the Beloved Disciple, who rested on the breast of Jesus at the Last Supper, was enflamed with love for it. Love of this Heart kindled the ardor of millions of martyrs during the first centuries of the Church. St. Cyprian (died 258) writes: "The heart of Jesus is the source of the stream of eternal life." St. Augustine (died 430) says of this Heart: "All that enter here are safe from shipwreck." The only truth in the above objection is that the devotion to the Sacred Heart received a new impulse and spread wonderfully throughout the Church in latter years.

2. *Devotion to the Sacred Heart fosters superstition: I worship the entire Christ.*

There is no superstition whatsoever connected with the devotion to the Sacred Heart. We adore this Heart because it is the Heart of Jesus; that is, the Heart of the Person of the Eternal Word, with whom it is inseparably united. We adore the love divine, bountiful and infinite, the source of all He did and suffered for our sake. Is this superstition?

3. *But how can you justify the so-called "thanksgivings" published in acknowledgment of favors received?*

1. It is the doctrine of the Catholic Church

that the prayer of faith is a means to obtain the help of God in temporal and spiritual needs. Our Lord Himself assures us: "If you shall ask me anything in my name, that I will do." (*John* xiv. 14.) He invites us: "Come to me, all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you." (*Matt.* xi. 28.) This divine promise always will and must be fulfilled when the prayer is in the name of Jesus; that is, when it is made with faith and confidence in the merits of Christ, and for the purpose of obtaining that which is not an impediment to the salvation of the person praying. "And we know that He heareth whatsoever we ask: we know that we have the petitions which we request of Him." (*John* v. 15.) The granting of our petitions depends on the faithful fulfilment of these conditions.

2. The Church teaches that a pious vow or promise made to God or to one of His saints is pleasing in the sight of God, and that its non-fulfilment is sinful. As the person making a vow incurs an obligation which otherwise would not bind him, its efficacy for obtaining graces is greater than that of a mere petition. Therefore we may expect that God will come to our aid when we implore it by making a vow; the more so, because a vow is superior to prayer, to which He promised a gracious hearing. Holy Scripture and church history afford many proofs of this.

3. It is a duty imposed by natural law, by the

doctrine and the example of the Church, that man return thanks to God for the aid and graces obtained. If this gratitude finds public expression, God's goodness, power, and mercy is proclaimed, and His glory is promoted thereby. Again, by publishing the favors obtained others are impelled to have recourse to God in their trials and needs. And the greater our distress, the more we feel impelled to make public our gratitude for the relief experienced. If we, for this purpose, use the press, and particularly the "Messenger of the Sacred Heart," published in various languages, who can accuse us of wrongdoing?

4. *God ordained natural means for the cure of bodily ailments, etc.: why, then, have recourse to supernatural ones?*

We implore God's aid; we have recourse to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in our afflictions, and our prayers are heard. Are we deceived, or is it a superstition, if we ascribe the help received to prayer, or rather to God's mercy? Only one who does not know or does not believe in God's mercy and in the efficacy of prayer can hold such a view.

Example

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART

We have before remarked that the history of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus dates

back to the very beginning of the Church. But if we would follow it up from that time we should have to review, more or less extensively, the lives of all the saints. Hence we content ourselves with relating its spread in recent times.

The devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, as practised in the Church to-day, owes its origin to revelations made by our blessed Saviour to a holy nun of the Order of the Visitation, Margaret Mary Alacoque, who appeared visibly to her. There was between these apparitions a considerable interval: some months between the first and second and at least one year between the second and third. The first of the three revelations took place on the feast of St. John the Evangelist, December 27, 1673. She writes:

“Once, being before the Blessed Sacrament, I felt wholly filled with the divine Presence, and so powerfully moved by it that I forgot myself and the place in which I was. I abandoned myself to the Divine Spirit, and yielded my heart to the power of His love. He made me rest for a long time on His divine breast, where He discovered to me the wonders of His love and the inexplicable secrets of His Sacred Heart, which He had hitherto kept hidden from me. Now He opened it to me for the first time, but in a way so real, so sensible, that it left me no room for doubt, though I am always in dread of deceiving myself. The Lord said to me: ‘My divine Heart is so compassionately in love with men that it

can no longer contain within itself the flames of its ardent charity. It must pour them out by thy means, and manifest itself to them with its precious treasures, which contain all the graces of which they have need to be saved from perdition.' He added: 'I have chosen thee as an abyss of unworthiness and ignorance to accomplish so great a design, so that all may be done by me.' "

The second revelation took place in 1674. Its exact date is not known. She writes: "Once, when the Blessed Sacrament was exposed, my soul being absorbed in extraordinary recollection, Our Lord presented Himself to me. He was brilliant with glory; His five wounds shone like suns. Flames darted from all parts of His sacred humanity, but especially from His adorable breast, which resembled a furnace, and which, opening, displayed to me His loving and amiable Heart, the living source of these flames. He unfolded to me the inexplicable wonders of His pure love, and to what an excess He had carried it for the love of men, from whom He had received only ingratitude. 'This is,' He said, 'much more painful to me than all I suffered in my passion. If men rendered me some return of love I should esteem little all I have done for them, and should wish, if such could be, to suffer it over again; but they meet my eager love with coldness and rebuffs. Do you, at least, console and rejoice me by supplying as much as you can for their ingratitude.' "

Margaret excused herself on the plea of incapacity. "Fear not," said Jesus; "behold, here is a wherewith to furnish all that is wanting to thee." "And at that moment," continues Margaret, "the divine Heart being opened, there shot forth a flame so ardent that I thought I should be consumed by it." Thoroughly penetrated by the consuming flame, and unable longer to endure the fire, she implored Our Saviour to have pity on her weakness. "Fear nothing," said He to her; "I shall be thy strength. Listen only to what I desire of thee to prepare thee for the accomplishment of my designs." Then the Lord asked two things of her: the first, to communicate every first Friday of each month in reparation of the offenses committed against Him; the second, to prostrate herself on the night between Thursday and Friday of every week for an hour with her face to the ground, in expiation of the sins of men, and to console His heart for that general desertion to which the weakness of the apostles in Gethsemani was only a slight prelude.

"During all this time," relates Margaret Mary, "I was unconscious: I knew not where I was. Some of the Sisters came to lead me away, and, seeing that I could neither reply nor support myself on my feet, they led me to our Mother." On being told of the vision, the Superioress granted her permission to communicate on the first Friday of the month, and to rise on the night between Thursday and Friday.

On June 16, 1675, the last of the revelations relative to the Sacred Heart took place. On that date, during the octave of the feast of Corpus Christi, Blessed Margaret Mary was on her knees before the tabernacle. Suddenly Our Lord appeared on the altar and discovered to her His Heart. "Behold," said He to her, "this Heart which has so loved men that it has spared nothing, even to exhausting and consuming itself, in order to testify its love. In return I receive from the greater part only ingratitude, by their irreverence and sacrilege, and by the coldness and contempt they have for me in this sacrament of love. And what is most painful to me is that they are hearts consecrated to me." Then He commanded her to have established in the Church a particular feast to honor His Sacred Heart. "It is for this reason," He continued, "that I ask thee that the first Friday after the octave of the Blessed Sacrament be appropriated to a special feast, to honor my heart by communicating on that day, and making reparation for the indignity that it received. And I promise that my heart shall dilate to pour out abundantly the influences of its love on all that will render it this honor or procure its being rendered."

What the Lord asked has been done. The Church examined these revelations; she declared them true and authentic, and following the example of the humble virgin, she prostrated before the Sacred Heart. First individual Sisters, then

entire communities of the Order of the Visitation took up the devotion. It spread to devout persons in the world, and made truly wonderful progress. The first Friday of the month is widely observed as a day of communion; throughout the whole Church the Friday following the octave of Corpus Christi is the feast of the Sacred Heart and consecrated to the contemplation of the tenderness, the love of this best of all hearts.

In the canonical office approved for the feast of the Sacred Heart we read: "The Sovereign Pontiff Clement XIII permitted the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to those churches which sought this permission, that the faithful, under the symbol of the Heart, might remember with more devotion and advantage the love which Jesus Christ testified by suffering and dying for the redemption of mankind, and instituting, in memory of His death, the Sacrament of His body and blood." To which the following addition was made by decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, approved by Pope Leo XIII, August 19, 1890: "Pope Pius IX extended this feast to the universal Church, and Pope Leo XIII, acceding to the wishes of the Catholic world, raised it to the rank of a double of the first class."

In the course of time quite a number of pious practices and associations were introduced, which have their origin in the devotion to the Sacred

Heart; for instance, the Archconfraternity of the Sacred Heart, the Apostleship of Prayer, etc. The Litany of the Sacred Heart was approved for public use by Pope Leo XIII April 2, 1899.

CHAPTER V

The Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, and our Mother

WE READ in the Gospel, "Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ." (*Matt.* i. 16.) She is, then, the Mother of Jesus, and because Jesus is God, she is the Mother of God. True, the divine nature of Jesus did not take its origin in her, but in the Eternal Father; but from her came He who, in consequence of the hypostatic union of the divine and human nature in Christ, is one divine Person. Thus the Church decreed against Nestorius, and from that time on Mary was always called "Mother of God."

This divine maternity of Mary is the reason why the Church renders such great honor to her. "What do you seek, what do you desire greater in this Virgin," writes St. Anselm, "than that she is the Mother of God? The evangelist relates that of her was born Jesus, and in this expression he gathers all the prerogatives that may be attributed to her." And the pious author, Peter Callensis, says: "What other divine gifts and honors can we mention of Mary, except to say that she is, in truth, at the same time the Mother of God and the mother of man? Whatever else besides this we say in her honor is far beneath that which is expressed in these words."

From the divine maternity of Mary follows that she exceeds in dignity everything else in heaven and on earth, God alone excepted. St. Peter Damian writes: "Who is more glorious than the Virgin Mary, she who encompassed even the greatness of God? Behold the seraphs, raise yourself up to the sublimity of their nature: you will see that the greatest of them is far below the Virgin in greatness, and that He alone surpasses her, by whom she was created." And St. Anselm says: "Simply saying of the Blessed Virgin that she is the Mother of God surpasses all greatness conceivable after God." The reason is given by St. Thomas Aquinas, who writes: "Because of her relation to her divine Son, who is an Infinite Being, she, too, in a manner, is infinite."

From the maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary follows that she is not only infinitely above our praise, but also above our admiration. Everything in and about her is miraculous, and all we can do is to be filled with wonder. Mary says of herself: "He that is mighty hath done great things to me." (*Luke* i. 49.) St. Augustine remarks on these words: "I candidly state that the Mother of God, on account of her greatness, was herself unable to declare what she had received from God."

From Mary's dignity as Mother of God follows that she alone, of all mankind, was conceived without the stain of original sin. As Mother of the Redeemer of mankind from sin, she could not

be permitted to remain for a single moment under sin's domain. Therefore the Church applies to her the words: "Thou art all fair, O my love, and there is not a spot in thee." (*Cant.* iv. 7.) The angel greeted Mary: "Hail, full of grace." (*Luke* i. 28.) The holy Fathers call Mary the "Immaculate Virgin, untainted by sin, the Virgin preserved from original and actual sin." The Fathers of the Council of Trent declared that "it was not their intention to include the Immaculate Virgin Mary, Mother of God, in the decree relating to original sin." (*Sess.* v.) This singular prerogative of Mary was declared a dogma of Catholic faith by Pope Pius IX December 8, 1854, because, as the Pontiff remarked, this doctrine was contained from the beginning in the deposit of faith. For many centuries before this explicit definition there had existed practical unanimity on the subject among theologians.

From Mary's dignity as Mother of God follows that she possessed all virtues in the highest degree; that she co-operated so effectually with the fulness of grace that not a single one was sterile or ineffective; that from the first moment of her life all her actions were perfect; that she surpassed in merit the greatest saints. St. Gregory the Great writes: "By conceiving the Word she raised the summit of her virtues above the choirs of angels to the very throne of God."

From the dignity of Mary's maternity follows that all the prerogatives, privileges, and graces

that were accorded to the saints must be vindicated to Mary in a much greater degree, in as far as they are appropriate to her. (*St. Bernard.*)

From the dignity of Mary's maternity follows that no being was ever loved by God as Mary is loved by Him, and that He has greater complacency in her than in all heaven. (*St. Anselm.*)

From the dignity of Mary's maternity follows that she is most intimately united with her divine Son, as St. Peter Damian declares. And he continues: "Let all creation tremble in silence; let no creature dare to investigate a dignity and grandeur like hers."

From Mary's dignity as Mother of God follows that she had maternal authority over her divine Son. He "was subject to them." (*Luke ii. 51.*) Dionysius Petavius remarks on these words: "Consider the authority and rights of a mother. Remember the influence and right of control embodied in this name. Its mention reminds us of the power she has over her child, and pictures the latter to us as docile and obedient to her, preferring her will to His own. Hence, when we mention the Mother of God, let us remember all this; let us remember that, in a manner, God is subject to her."

From the dignity of Mary's maternity follows that God could not make Mary greater than He made her. St. Bonaventure says as truly as beautifully: "Mary is that being, greater than whom God could create none. He can create a

better world, a more beautiful heaven; but He can not create a greater mother than Mary, His mother." St. Thomas Aquinas and a number of other divines agree with the seraphic doctor.

From Mary's dignity as Mother of God follows that the veneration and devotion paid to her recurs to her divine Son. Thus reason teaches us; for by honoring the mother we honor the Son, and He accepts it as paid to Himself. This statement is agreed in by all doctors of the Church.

From all these reasons, and especially from the last-named one, it is evident that a special veneration is due to Mary, and our devotion to her redounds to the honor and glory of God.

And this glorious Mother of God, so exalted above our feeble praise, is *our* mother, the mother of mankind. This is proven by the whole plan of redemption. Mary could not consent to become the Mother of the Redeemer without including in her consent the subjects of redemption. "She has borne one man," says St. Antonine, "and thereby has borne again all men. Beneath the cross of her divine Son she has borne us to life in great pain, just as Eve, our first mother, has borne us to death under the tree of forbidden fruit. That there be no doubt about this, her divine Son declared it to be so in His last will." "When, therefore, Jesus had seen His mother and the disciple standing whom He loved, He saith to His mother: Woman, behold thy Son. After

that He saith to the disciple: Behold thy mother." (*John* xix. 26-27.) She gave up her Son for the redemption of mankind, and He gave us, in the person of St. John, to her as her children, and declared her our mother. From that moment we belong entirely to Mary, and Mary belongs to us: "Behold thy mother!"

And she remained our mother after she left this earth. She took her maternal heart up to heaven with her. She loves us beyond the power of description. Her love toward us, instead of diminishing in heaven, increased. For the very reason that she so loved us on earth as to deliver up her divine Son for us, and to give us, in Him, her all, she can not cease in heaven to show us her maternal love. Like Esther, in the Old Testament, she seems to have been elevated to her high station in order to be able to come to our aid, and to load us with benefits. The holy Fathers call her our mediatrix, because she interposes between God and man, because she is our advocate in heaven; and we may not refuse her this title without being ungrateful and without detracting from the honor due to her.

She hates sin, but she loves and has pity on the sinner. Because she does not share in the dispensation of justice her share in the dispensing of mercy and in effecting reconciliation is so much the larger. If St. Augustine is permitted to exclaim: "O blessed guilt, that deserved such a Redeemer," we may also say with St. Anselm:

“Were there no sinners there would be no Redeemer, and therefore also no Mother of the Redeemer.” She regards sinners as those to whom she owes her divine maternity and all her glory.

Mary’s love for mankind may be considered also as follows: She loves us because she loves God and because God loves us. She loves us as her brethren, who share human nature with her. She loves us as her children, whom she has borne to eternal life. She loves us because we are miserable and wretched. True, we offended her divine Son, but she knows our frailty, our blindness: she perceives the attacks of the devil and the flesh to which we are exposed: and she is thereby inclined all the more to come to our aid.

If this be the case, if Mary assists even the unworthy who have recourse to her, how much more must she be willing to help them that are her and her Son’s faithful children, and let no day pass without honoring her by devout prayers and pious practices? Hence St. Bernard may well say: “Remember, O most blessed Virgin, that it was never heard that one who took refuge with thee, sought thy intercession, protection, and aid, was deserted by thee, O mother of the divine Word, and our mother.”

Do not imagine, however, that this good and loving mother will come to your aid if you continue, with malice and forethought, to offend her divine Son. He who does so is no client of Mary; for true devotion to her consists not only in hon-

oring her by prayer, but principally in imitating her virtues.

And is there anything in her example that we are unable to follow? True, we can not attain to her perfection in virtue, but we can imitate her virtues to a certain degree. To follow Mary's example there is no need of working miracles, of having ecstasies, or of any other extraordinary performances. All that is necessary is to persevere faithfully in the small duties of daily life. If we do this, Mary, even as she never ceases to be the Mother of God, will never cease to be *our* mother.

OBJECTIONS

1. *Devotion to Mary is overdone in the Catholic Church.*

Devotion to Mary is *not* overdone in the Catholic Church. Catholics give to Mary only that honor which is due to her. They follow the example of Elizabeth, who was inspired by the Holy Ghost to address her: "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb." (*Luke* i. 42.) They fulfil the prophecy uttered on that occasion by Mary herself: "Behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed." (*Luke* i. 48.) We give honor to Mary because of the privileges conferred on her by God and for the virtues she practised in faithful co-operation with His grace.

But we never give her divine or supreme honor,

which is due to God alone. Whatever excellencies we attribute to the Blessed Virgin, or whatever terms we make use of to express the esteem and respect we have for her, we always remember that she is indebted to God for all the gifts of nature and grace she possessed in this life, and for the great glory to which she is exalted in heaven.

2. *Why pray to Mary, when we can pray to God Himself?*

We pray to the Blessed Virgin to *intercede* for us with God, because her influence, as mother of His divine Son, is great with Him. St. Paul writes: "I desire therefore first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings be made for all men." (1 Tim. ii. 1.) If, then, we are to pray for one another, Mary must also pray for us. She will do so all the more willingly if we ask her for it. And why ask her intercession? Why does the child ask his mother to intercede with his father? Why does he not approach him directly? Because he knows that the mother's word and influence are more effective with the father than his own; because he places greater trust in the power of his mother's intercession.

3. *But Catholics pray to images, especially to so-called miraculous images, and implore them for help.*

We *venerate* and *honor* images on account of their relation to Christ and His saints; but we

never pray to them, nor beg their assistance, because we know they are unable to assist us, whilst the saint represented by the image or picture can do so by his prayer to God for us.

If miracles occur at the shrines of the so-called miraculous images or pictures, they are not wrought by them, but by God, who graciously hears the petition of the saint represented, because prayers were said with special confidence in that saint's powerful intercession with God.

To infer that Catholics believe an image to have the power of helping them because they pay external marks of respect to it is indeed most uncharitable.

4. *The dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary is a new article of faith.*

Quite the reverse. Mary's preservation from every stain of sin was first foretold by God in paradise: "I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed: she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel." (*Gen. i. 15.*) It was, in the fulness of time, announced by the Archangel Gabriel: "Hail, full of grace: the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women." (*Luke i. 28.*) The divinity of Christ demands the entire sinlessness of His mother. Would God select for His mother a sinner, when it was in His power to preserve her from sin? God *could* and therefore *did* preserve Mary from sin: He *kept off* the stain of

sin from her soul. This singular favor was bestowed upon her in view of the merits of Christ, who therefore is truly her Redeemer. What Pope Pius IX did on December 8, 1854, was: Instead of proclaiming a *new* dogma, he solemnly declared that the Immaculate Conception of Mary was divine revelation, piously believed at all times in the Church.

Examples

SAVED BY THE POWER OF MARY'S INTERCESSION

In the lives of the saints of the desert we read that St. Mary of Egypt fled from her relatives at the age of twelve years and went to Alexandria, where, by her infamous life, she became the scandal of the city. After a sinful life she wandered into Jerusalem, and there, on the feast of the Holy Cross, she felt herself moved to enter a church, more through curiosity than devotion. But when she was on the point of entering she was driven back by an invisible power. She made a second attempt, but was again repulsed. She endeavored a third time and a fourth time to enter, but in vain. She retired into a corner of the porch, and there, accidentally raising her eyes, saw a painted image of Mary. Turning toward it, she said, weeping: "O Mother of God, look down upon me, a poor sinner! I know that in punishment of my sins I am not worthy of being heard by thee; but thou art the refuge of sinners. For the love of Jesus, obtain for me permission to

enter the church. I wish to change my life and to do penance wheresoever thou wilt direct me."

Now she was able to enter, knelt before the cross and wept. Then she returned to the image, and again prayed to Mary, saying: "O lady, behold me ready. Where dost thou wish me to retire to do penance?" She heard a voice saying to her: "Go beyond the Jordan, and you will find the place of *your* repose." She made her confession, then crossing the river, reached the desert and began her life of penance. She spent fifty-seven years in the desert, and in her eighty-seventh year was found there by the Abbot Zosimus, to whom she gave an account of her whole life, and begged him to return in the following year to bring her Holy Communion. The holy hermit did so. She asked him to come again next year, but when he returned he found her dead and her body surrounded by light.

ST. ALPHONSUS LIGUORI

This saint was one of the most fervent clients of Mary. He is the founder of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, or Redemptorists, and was Bishop of St. Agatha in Italy. Pope Pius IX enrolled him among the doctors of the Church.

From his earliest youth St. Alphonsus cherished a most tender devotion to the Blessed Virgin. Filled with confidence in the power of her intercession, he had recourse to her in all his

difficulties, firmly convinced that she would come to his aid. First a missionary, then a bishop, he was ever zealous in inspiring others with the same confidence, and wrote a number of pious and instructive books for this purpose. In return the Blessed Virgin, whose honor he so ardently promoted, showered extraordinary graces upon him. The most hardened sinners were converted by his sermons. He persevered in his devotion to our blessed mother during his long life, and died holding her image in his hands, with a sweet smile on his lips and a heavenly joy depicted on his countenance, in 1787, in the ninety-first year of his age.



OUR LORD AT THE HOME OF MARY AND MARTHA

"Martha, thou art troubled about many things. Mary hath chosen the best part."

PART III

The Church of Christ

CHAPTER I

Founding of the Church

WHEN the disciples of Christ, on the day of the ascension, had seen Him in His visible form for the last time; when He, disappearing among the clouds, left them; after the angels had appeared and said to them: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand you looking up to heaven? This Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come as you have seen Him going into heaven" (*Acts* i. 11), they returned to Jerusalem, and "were persevering with one mind in prayer with the women and Mary, the mother of Jesus." (*Acts* i. 14). But in the world abroad triumphed the spirit of darkness: all that the God-man had preached, wrought, and suffered seemed vanished like a dream.

Then came the Jewish feast of Pentecost, the solemn memorial of the law-giving on Sinai, when, amid thunder and lightning, the Lord had delivered His commandments unto Moses. On that first Pentecost morning after Christ's ascension was proclaimed, on Mount Sion, in the chamber of the Last Supper, the New Law. "And when the days of Pentecost were accomplished, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty wind coming, and filled the whole house where

they were sitting. And there appeared to them parted tongues as it were of fire, and it sat upon every one of them. And they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and they began to speak with divers tongues according as the Holy Ghost gave them to speak." (*Acts* ii. 1-4.)

Therefore, in the New Law, the feast of Pentecost is observed in memory of the coming of the Holy Ghost on the disciples, and as the anniversary of the founding of the Church. True, the Church was not founded on one day; but the feast of Pentecost, observed by the disciples in the "upper room" at Jerusalem, may be regarded as the day when the Church first appeared in a concise form in public.

The Church was established when Christ, her Founder, said to St. Peter: "And I say to thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven." (*Matt.* xvi. 18, 19.) With these words Christ appointed St. Peter the visible head of the Church, His vicar on earth. This Church reached her full estate when, on that day of Pentecost, after the sermon of St. Peter, three thousand persons were baptized and constituted the first Christian community. The events that led up to this were as follows:

The apostles were the men appointed for the propagation of the great work instituted by Christ. The first mention thereof is found in the Gospel of St. John. Our Lord had been pointed out by His precursor, St. John the Baptist, with the words: "Behold the Lamb of God." Hearing these words, two of John's disciples followed Christ. One of them, Andrew, later found his brother Simon and said to him: "We have found the Messiah." And he brought him to Jesus, who said to him: "Thou art Simon, the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is interpreted Peter." (*John* i. 42.) Not long thereafter Jesus, walking along the Sea of Galilee, again met Peter and Andrew. "He saith to them: Come ye after me, and I will make you be fishers of men. And they, immediately leaving their nets, followed Him." (*Matt.* iv. 19.) Again we read in the Gospel of St. Luke: "And it came to pass that when the multitude pressed upon Him to hear the word of God, He stood by the lake of Genesareth, and saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them and were washing their nets. And going up into one of the ships that was Simon's, He desired him to draw back a little from the land. And sitting, He taught the multitudes out of the ship. Now when He had ceased to speak, He said to Simon: Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon answering, said to Him: Master, we have labored all the night, and

have taken nothing; but at Thy word I will let down the net. And when they had done this, they enclosed a very great multitude of fishes, and their net broke. . . . Which when Simon Peter saw, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying: Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was wholly astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken. . . . And Jesus saith to Simon: Fear not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men." (*Luke v. 1-10.*)

A more determined form was given to the apostolic college later. St. Luke writes: "And it came to pass in those days, that He went out into a mountain to pray, and He passed the whole night in the prayer of God. And when day was come, He called unto Him His disciples, and He chose twelve of them (whom He also called apostles): Simon, whom He surnamed Peter, and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alpheus, and Simon who was called Zelotes, and Jude the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot who was the traitor." (*Luke vi. 12-16.*)

This was the beginning of the visible Church: the appointment of visible pastors in the persons of the apostles. Their hierarchic office becomes still more apparent from the instruction given them by Christ concerning the settling of difficulties: "If thy brother shall offend against thee, go and rebuke him between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou shalt gain thy brother;

and if he will not hear thee, take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may stand. And if he will not hear them, tell the Church, and if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican. Amen, I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed in heaven." (*Matt.* xviii. 15-18.) By these words Christ announced to the apostles the hierarchical power they were to exercise in His future visible Church, and which He solemnly conferred upon them when He was about to ascend into heaven. Until then, He Himself governed the incipient Church: but after His ascension the apostles, and first of all St. Peter, were to be her visible pastors.

The Primacy was conferred on St. Peter on the shore of the Sea of Tiberias, or Genesareth, when Jesus, after His resurrection, appeared to His disciples and said to Peter: "Simon, son of John, lovest thou me more than these? He saith to Him: Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith to him: Feed my lambs. He saith to him again: Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? He saith to Him: Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith to him: Feed my lambs. He saith to him a third time: Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because He had said to him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said to Him: Lord, Thou

knowest all things: Thou knowest that I love Thee. He said to him: Feed my sheep." (*John* xxi. 15-17.)

We read, too, that Christ commissioned *all* the apostles to preach, to baptize, and after having baptized the people, to guide them. After His resurrection Jesus "spoke to them, saying: All power is given to me in heaven and on earth. Going, therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." (*Matt.* xxviii. 18-20.)

Such, then, was the state of the Church on the feast of the first Christian Pentecost. Her pastors were divinely appointed; a number of faithful followed them, as they had followed Our Lord. But the faithful, according to the ordinance of Christ, were to be received into the Church by a visible act of adoption, by baptism. Peter therefore baptized those whom he had addressed: "And there were added on that day about three thousand souls." (*Acts* ii. 41.)

Thus the Church, as founded by Christ and His apostles, appears as a compact organism, consisting of head and members; as a religious community, *visible* as any secular organization. She stands before us as a union comprising all men who are baptized, and who profess the true faith

in Christ, and are visibly in communion with her divinely appointed visible head. This visible union consists, first, in professing, in word and deed, the same faith; secondly, in using the same sacraments, or visible means of salvation; thirdly, in submission to the same visible head, the vicar of Christ on earth, the successor of St. Peter, the Roman Pontiff, or Pope; and in obedience to their bishops, the legitimate successors of the apostles, in all things pertaining to the doctrine of faith and to the practice of the Christian life.

And for what purpose was the Church founded? After Christ, visibly appearing on earth, had proved His divinity and founded His visible Church, He returned to His eternal home in heaven. But *we*, according to His explicit declaration, have need of His doctrine, both as to faith and as to morality, for the attainment of our salvation. Where can we find this doctrine? Only in the institution established by Him for that purpose—the Church.

OBJECTIONS

1. *Christ did not establish a visible church. The present form and government of the Catholic Church was developed in the course of time.*

This assertion claims to be based on Christ's words: "My kingdom is not of this world" (*John* xviii. 36), which are said to mean: "My kingdom, the Church which I instituted, is invisible." If this explanation were true, Christ and His

apostles must also have been invisible, for Our Lord also says: "They are not of this world, as I also am not of this world." (*John* xvii. 16.) On the contrary, Christ repeatedly spoke of the Church which He was about to found as of a *visible* institution. When He speaks of the kingdom of God, or the kingdom of heaven, He thereby designates by no means always heaven, or the *invisible* Church on earth, which, according to our adversaries, consists of the just members alone; but He refers to the Church militant and visible on earth, to the Church to which belong not only the just, but in which, until the last judgment, are mingled the good and the bad, as is evident from the parables of the good seed and the cockles, of the wise and foolish virgins, of the nuptial garment and of the net containing good and worthless fishes. From all these follows that it was Christ's purpose to found a Church which was to embrace the good and the bad, and they certainly are visible: hence the Church to which they belong must also be visible.

2. *Church and state often clash: why does the Church not yield? She is, after all, subject to the state, because her members are the state's subjects.*

The Church was instituted to procure the supernatural happiness of mankind; the state is intended to secure the welfare of society on earth. They are complete and independent, each in its own sphere. Professor Philipps, author of a

learned work on canonical law, writes: "A glance at the difference between spiritual and temporal authority will prove the impossibility of their co-ordination. The Church is the kingdom of Christ, established by God, all-comprising, founded on unalterable laws for the attainment of eternal salvation. States are individual governments, established in various forms by and for men. How can a commonwealth established by men be co-ordinate with a divine institution? How can the law, limited by time, space, and human fickleness, be equal to the law eternal? How can the attainment of earthly welfare come into comparison with the bliss of reigning forever with Christ?" This was ever the Christian view of the relation between Church and state. It is not the private opinion of individual churchmen, but the doctrine of the Church, based upon Holy Scripture and tradition.

3. *The Church interposes between Christ and man: yet Christ is our only Mediator with God.*

True, the Church stands between Christ and man; but she thereby occupies the very position which He assigned to her. Nobody, not even the Church herself, can alter this relation. Christ certainly is our Mediator with God the Father, but the Church is our mediatrix with Christ. From the Church we receive Christ's doctrine and the means of salvation which He instituted. She received from Him the command to teach all nations. (*Matt.* xxviii. 18.) Hence adhering to

Christ avails man nothing, if he not also adheres to His Church, and is led to Him by her. The objection that Catholics place the Church between Christ and man is therefore rather in their favor than to their confusion. Christ thus ordained it; His will is supreme.

4. *The Church is essentially invisible.*

Quite the reverse: Visibility is an essential characteristic of the Church, for it was Christ's will that she be visible. He began His work of redemption in a visible manner, and therefore its continuance must also be conducted visibly. In fact, everything ordained by Our Lord concerning the Church is visible: her supreme head, her pastors, her sacraments, etc. She is visible, too, in her members; for they profess the same faith, receive the same sacraments, offer the same sacrifice—all under one visible head.

Example

A NOBLE CONVERT

Princess Elisabeth von Wolfenbuettel was sought in marriage by Prince Charles of Austria, later King Charles VI. She had been brought up a Protestant, and one of the conditions of her marriage was that she become a Catholic. She wrote to some noted Protestant divines, asking whether a person professing the Roman Catholic faith could be saved. They replied that the Roman Catholic Church taught correctly all the fundamental truths of the Christian religion, and

that the attainment of salvation was possible in her bosom.

"If this be so," declared the princess, "I shall profess the Catholic faith immediately. The Catholic Church is not so liberal; she does not concede that Protestants have the whole Christian truth. In a matter of such importance I want to be on the sure side."

Her father was of the same mind, and they both joined the Catholic Church.

CHAPTER II

The Marks of the Church

THE Church founded by Christ must be *distinguishable*; that is, she must bear certain *marks* by which she may be known as such by all men: the more so, because a great number of religious denominations claim to be the true Church.

As salvation can be attained only in the true Church, Christ, who desires all men to be saved, must certainly have endowed His Church with certain marks by which she can easily be recognized. These marks must themselves be recognizable: first, they must be manifest to everybody, and more easily knowable than the Church itself. Secondly, they must not be found in other churches, but must be characteristic of the Church of Christ alone.

Not all *characteristics* of the Church are at the same time *marks*. To be the latter they must appear more directly and must be more easily knowable than the Church herself. Not every characteristic of the Church is such as that it may be known in a direct manner, and that by it the true Church may be distinguished from among the false. Thus infallibility is a characteristic of the Church, but we can not be led into her by it, because we must first learn to know her as the

true Church by some distinctive mark before we become convinced of her infallibility.

Which are the peculiar marks of the true Church of Christ? The Council of Nice (A.D. 325) enumerates them in the creed which it formulated against certain heretics, as follows: "I believe—in the *one, holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.*"

The first mark of the true Church, and the essential proof of her truth, is her *oneness* and the *unity* resulting therefrom. Oneness—unity—is an essential quality of the Church, for only *one* church can be the true one, because truth is essentially one. The spirit of truth, that spirit which Christ sent her and declared would abide with her till the consummation of the world, unites and guides her members. In the Catholic Church we find at all times and everywhere oneness of the doctrine of faith and morality; the same rule of faith, the same sacraments and the same head, under whom the faithful are preserved in unity. Hence St. Paul writes: "Walk worthy of the vocation in which you are called, with all humility and mildness, with patience, supporting one another in charity, careful to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. One body and one spirit as you are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all." (*Eph.* iv. 1-6.) St. John, too, writes that He was to "gather together in one the children of God." (*John* xi. 52.) Of course, for

amid schisms and strife the promise of Our Lord that the Church shall last "unto the consummation of the world" can not attain fulfilment.

On the unity of the Church St. Ireneus writes: "Although spread all over the world, the Roman Church nevertheless preserves most zealously the apostolic faith. Being one in heart and spirit, she always believes the same doctrine. Different as the languages of the world are, the faith is the same everywhere, and she teaches and professes it as if she had but one tongue." The same is true to-day: what the Church taught in the beginning she teaches now, and will teach it till the end of time—everywhere, without the least change, addition or deviation. She holds fast to the "Deposit of Faith"—to whatever she received from her divine Founder as the means of salvation.

For, as all men are called to one eternal destiny, their salvation, it is obvious that they must have the same means whereby to attain to it. Catholics all acknowledge and receive the same sacraments. They are all baptized in the same saving waters, "one baptism." They receive the same Holy Spirit in confirmation, "one Spirit." They partake of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Most Holy Eucharist, "Do this for a commemoration of me." They seek for mercy and pardon at the same tribunal of penance, "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them: and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." When they are on the bed of death, the

priests of the Church apply the same Holy Unction to them, "Anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." All those who are charged by the Church to perform her holy ministrations receive their commission in the same holy orders, "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you." The same sacrament of matrimony sanctifies the union and the propagation of the faithful, "This is a great sacrament." The same great sacrifice of the Mass is everywhere offered; even the forms of the public worship are everywhere the same. The Catholic Church is strictly uniform on every essential matter of discipline, whether it regards pastors or people.

The second mark of the true Church is *holiness*. The Church is holy in her Founder, Jesus Christ. He who is the All-Holy founded and "loved the Church, and delivered Himself up for it, that He might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." (*Eph.* v. 26.)

To understand this passage correctly in its application to the holiness of the Church we must consider the various meanings of the word "*holy*." In its common acceptance it is used to signify "dedicated to God, relating in a special manner to God." In this sense the term "*holy*" is applied to inanimate things, to certain events

and to a class of individuals. In its latter application it designates moral excellence and perfection.

In the Church we must distinguish a twofold element—the divine and the human. God's designs are accomplished in and by human beings; hence there must be human, aye, unholy elements in the Church, and yet the divine element must be supreme. The Church is holy in her doctrine. Everything taught by her is holy, breathes holiness and leads to holiness. She teaches her children to believe all that God has revealed, and to practise all that He has commanded. The morality preached by her leads to holiness, and renders man perfect. But the bearers of her authority, the ministers of her sacraments are human, even in the administration of their sacred office. Yet, even when they lead unholy lives, even when their moral conduct is not in accord with the duties of their sacred calling, their ministry retains, by the ordination of Christ, its divine efficacy. The faithful themselves, moreover, can not be deprived by sin of their holy character: they are irrevocably aggregated by baptism to the body of Christ, specially and individually consecrated to Him.

True, we seldom find perfect holiness in the members of the Church here on earth; yet she had at all times holy men and women among her children. Of all churches, the Catholic Church alone can lay claim to persons of every class whose

great virtues have been the admiration of all who knew them, and have been frequently attested by God through numerous miracles wrought by their intercession. Besides the canonized saints, the Catholic Church has comprised and still comprises within her pale multitudes of other saintly members: persons of either sex heroically practising the evangelical counsels, many of whom have exchanged large fortunes and high worldly rank and the pleasures of wealth for the poverty, humility and restraint of the religious life for God's sake. In the lower walks of life, too, we find, in the wide extent of the Catholic Church, that they who know and follow the precepts of their religion show forth to the world abundant and bright examples of moral, religious and social virtue, and exhibit in their lives genuine fruits of holiness.

The fact that not all the members of the Church are holy must not disturb us. The holy Fathers and commentators of Scripture remark: The Church is that field where cockles grow among the wheat; that threshing-floor where the chaff is separated from the grain; that net in which good and bad fishes are caught; that flock in which are found ewes and rams: in brief, that she is a community in which both the just and sinners are found.

If we, the members of this holy Church, do not observe in ourselves a continual growth in holiness, the fault lies not with the Church, but with

us: we do not make use of the means of holiness provided for us. And as to unholy members of the Church, they affect her holiness as little as the treason of Judas affected the holiness of the other apostles. The fact remains: despite the wicked members of the Church, there is no other religious denomination which can point to such holiness in its Founder, its doctrine, and its members as can the Catholic Church. Her Founder is Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God; her first members and ministers were the apostles whom He Himself selected and appointed, and who, in life and death, were eminent for holiness. And countless is the number of her faithful children who, during the course of centuries, lived a holy life and died a holy death in the bosom of the Catholic Church.

We do not contend, however, that there are no virtuous men and women amongst the members of other Christian denominations. We cheerfully grant that there are such; yea, that some of them, by their zeal for virtue and benevolence, put to shame many a bad Catholic. This is so much the more disgraceful to the latter, as they permit themselves to be surpassed in virtue by such as do not possess the many supernatural aids that the Church places at the Catholic's disposal. For this very reason the good works of non-Catholics are merely natural virtues, as a rule wanting in supernatural motives. And granted the virtue of non-Catholics: it wants one essential

proof. It was never attested by miracles, whereas in the Catholic Church we have for centuries witnessed the confirmation, by indisputable miracles, of the holiness and virtue of numerous of her members; by miracles, too, which were declared genuine and wrought by divine power only after the most rigid scrutiny.

To deny the gift of miracles to the Church is to deprive her of all her supernatural endowments. Christ has positively declared that they who believe in Him should receive the power of working even greater miracles than He wrought Himself: and the Church that produces saints also gives evidence of and proves that they have received and exercised this power during their lives.

Though *apostasy* and *excommunication* from the Church alone withdraw us from her communion, we will be her true and worthy members only in so far as we strive for holiness. What shall it profit a man to have his name on the baptismal record if he does not obey the Church? It will only serve to intensify his reprobation, because he assumed duties which he would not fulfil.

The third mark of the true Church is her *catholicity* or *universality*. She must be catholic or universal in three ways: universal as to *time*, universal as to *place*, and universal as to *doctrine*.

The Catholic Church alone possesses the glorious character of being the Church of *all times*,

and she is the only Church on earth that can be visibly traced back through the centuries to the time of Christ. In her communion alone great numbers of holy apostolic men have abounded in every age, who dedicated themselves to God in order to carry the light of the Gospel to those who "sat in darkness and in the shadow of death," and to bring heathen nations to the knowledge of Christ. Enlightened and learned Protestants, as well as Catholics, bear witness to her universality as to *time*.

Thus was the prophecy literally fulfilled, "Behold, I am with you *all days*, even to the consummation of the world." (*Matt.* xxviii. 20.) Again, it is by a special dispensation of God that in each of the twenty-four hours of the day the holy sacrifice of the New Law is offered up in the Catholic Church. When, in one part of the world, the priest leaves the altar, the time for celebrating Mass begins in some other country. Thus the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice shall continue without interruption till the end of time.

The true Church must be catholic or universal as to *place*. The Catholic Church alone can claim, in truth, that she is spread and will be spread throughout all nations. In her alone is fulfilled the prophecy: "From the rising of the sun even to the going down, my name is great among the Gentiles, and *in every place* there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean offering." (*Malach.* i. 11.) It is undeniably true that the

Catholic Church is spread over the whole world. From her very beginning she has always preached the Gospel to convert the heathen nations. She is the Church of all nations. Her religion, despite the many persecutions raised against her, is still the religion of the greater part of Europe, and is making numerous converts in all parts of the world. In the various countries of Asia; in Egypt, Ethiopia, Algiers, Tunis, and other parts of Africa there are flourishing congregations of Catholics; in the United States of North America the Church is spreading rapidly; Canada, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland are chiefly Catholic; the whole of South America and Mexico may be said to profess the Catholic faith; Australia's Church is in a flourishing condition. Everywhere her Sacrifice is offered, her sacraments are administered, her prayers ascend to the throne of God.

The Catholic Church alone is universal as to *doctrine*, for everywhere her teaching is the same. Like her divine Founder, her doctrine is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever: "Jesus Christ yesterday, and to-day, and the same forever." (*Heb.* xiii. 8.) She alone can lay claim to *catholicity*, and the term peculiarly belongs to her. "Heretics," says St. Augustine, "have made every exertion to obtain that name, yet they have never been able to succeed. If a stranger, on entering a city, were to ask, where is the Catholic Church? no heretic would dare to point out his heretical place of assembly."

The term "catholic," or universal, is found in the Apostles' Creed, and evidently implies not only that the Church of Christ was adapted to unite in her bosom all nations, but that it was meant to be the characteristic designation by which the true Church was to be distinguished from all false churches. "Christian is my name," says St. Pacian. "*Catholic* is my surname. By the former I am called, by the latter I am distinguished."

We learn in the New Testament that even as early as in the times of the apostles there arose men who, being converts from paganism or Judaism, retained some of their false religious views, and proclaimed doctrines incompatible with Christian truth. Again, in Christianity they found much that appealed to them. They made selections at will, commingling error with truth, and thus concocted new creeds, for which they claimed recognition as true Christian doctrine. They were called *heretics*, which Greek word exactly signifies what they were, because it means "pickers out," "choosers." In opposition to them the Church called herself "Catholic," thereby declaring that instead of choosing from among the doctrines of Christ, she accepted them all. She argued: Christ is God. God is truth itself, therefore we must accept on His divine authority whatever He teaches. For whoever wilfully rejects but one truth revealed by Christ, declares thereby that Christ has erred, and consequently

denies His divinity. Or he implies that not all truths revealed by Christ are essential to salvation, and thereby overthrows the whole structure of the Church.

The last of the four marks of the true Church is *apostolicity*; for any church claiming to be the true Church of Christ must be able to trace her doctrine, her priesthood, and her mission to the apostles of Christ. By the term "apostolic," as applied to the Church, is meant that Christ founded His Church through the apostles; that she received her doctrine, her priesthood, and the mission of her pastors from them, and that she must continue to the end of the world professing and teaching the same faith and doctrine that the apostles taught.

Of all the churches, the Catholic Church alone is *apostolic* as to *doctrine*, *priesthood* and *mission*. She alone has always preserved the sacred doctrine delivered originally by the apostles. Her history and her writers prove that what she teaches is nothing else than what has been taught by the apostles.

The Catholic Church alone is *apostolic* as to her *priesthood*. Her hierarchy in each generation receives its *apostolic succession* from the generation that went before, from the apostles to the present Pope and bishops. "I am kept in the Church," says St. Augustine, "by the succession of the prelates, from St. Peter down to the present bishop."

The Catholic Church alone is *apostolic* as to *mission*, because she has been governed by the apostles and their lawful successors up to the present time. The method employed by the apostles in the case of Paul and Barnabas is related as follows: "They, fasting and praying, and imposing their hands upon them, sent them away." (*Acts* xiii. 3.) That is, they first ordained, and then commissioned them to preach. And this was the continual practice of the Church. To be a legitimate bishop, that is, a legitimate successor of the apostles, the candidate must be consecrated by a bishop who is in communion with the Church and must receive appointment to a charge (diocese) from the Pope. The bishops receive directions from him, pay visits, at stated times, to the "threshold of the apostles," and then render an account of the state of their dioceses.

OBJECTIONS

1. *The schismatics profess the same faith and have the same sacraments as the Catholics; and yet these regard them as excommunicated.*

Schism is a withdrawal from the government of the Church by some of her members. Holy Scripture and the early Church condemn schism as severely as they do heresy. Most schismatics, consciously or unconsciously, are also heretics, because they reject some doctrine of the Church. The schismatic Greeks and Russians reject a number of doctrines taught by the Church,

2. *Every religious denomination aiming at the sanctification of its members, and attaining it at least in part, may claim to be called holy.*

This claim can be asserted only when a denomination's constitution, doctrine, and means of salvation are calculated to promote, and do promote, the godliness and morality of its members. This, however, is done by the Catholic Church alone, because she alone makes faith *together* with good works the conditions of salvation, or holiness. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." (*Heb. xi. 6.*) "For even as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead." (*James ii. 26.*)

3. *Statistics prove that the universality upon which the Roman Church bases her claim to Catholicity never actually existed.*

To prove the catholicity or universality of the Church, it suffices that at the end of the world every race shall have at some time belonged to the Church; it even suffices that at the end of time the Gospel shall have been preached to all, whether they have accepted it or not. It can not but be expected that, as individuals leave the Church, thus also nations leave it. To prove the catholicity of the Church it suffices to prove that she is international. To be so it is not necessary that she embrace, everywhere and at the same time, every nation; it is sufficient that she have members everywhere, that she be not restricted to certain countries, races, and nationalities.

Even if but a few members are found in each of the different parts of the world, the Church can claim to be universal, catholic. Christianity in its only true form, in the Catholic Church, is really and truly cosmopolitan, universal—established for all times, all races, all nations, and all classes.

According to the latest "Bulletin of the International Institute for Statistics," published in Paris, the total number of members of the various Christian denominations is as follows:

Catholics, 230,866,000.

Protestants, 134,238,000.

Schismatics, 98,000,000.

Which proves that the number of Catholics is greater than that of the total membership of all the other Christian denominations combined.

4. *Most of the early Christian communities were not established by the apostles: how, then, can their apostolic origin be proved?*

It is done as follows: Christ selected the apostles and appointed them pastors of His Church. The apostles, in their turn, in conformity with Christ's ordinance, appointed their successors. These, again, appointed theirs, and so on, and thus the succession was kept up even to our day. The present Pope, Pius X, can trace his succession back to St. Peter, appointed head of the Church by Christ. The bishops of the various dioceses can trace back their succession to the apostolic men appointed bishops by the

apostles or their successors, and through them to Christ Himself. This is asserted by St. Paul, saying: "Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom all the building, being framed together, groweth up into an holy temple in the Lord." (*Eph. ii. 20, 21.*)

5. *The logical deduction from the Catholic view concerning the Church is: "Outside the Church there is no salvation."*

True, "outside the Church there is no salvation." But whilst maintaining this principle, and whilst maintaining, furthermore, that the Catholic Church is the only one in which there is salvation, we demand to be understood correctly. The Catholic doctrine on this question is: "To those who, without any fault of theirs, are not within the pale of the Catholic Church, but candidly seek for the truth, and observe the commandments of God to the best of their ability, God will not refuse the grace of belonging, at least interiorly, to the Church. They belong to what is called the *soul* of the Church, and thus are saved. Pope Pius IX, in an Encyclical Letter, dated October 10, 1863, says: "It is known that they who, without any fault of their own, are ignorant of our holy religion, and zealously strive to observe the precepts of the natural law written by God in the hearts of all men, and live a good moral life, can, with the help of divine grace, obtain salvation."

6. *If this be so, why do Catholics not "let alone" Protestants, but embitter them by acrimonious controversies?*

First, because leading a soul from error to truth is an act of charity. Secondly, because in our day the majority of non-Catholics are too easy-going and find serious investigation of the truth troublesome. But as there is no salvation for the man who remains in error through his own fault, Catholics feel in duty bound to point out to him his errors. Thirdly, because it is more difficult for a man to be saved even if he is in error involuntarily than if he possessed the whole truth. And is it not uncharitable to call zeal for the truth acrimony?

The true Catholic must feel sorry for his non-Catholic brethren; for they are deprived of so many means of grace open to the members of the true Church: of the entirety of Christ's doctrine; of the inspiration of the Catholic ceremonial, so elevating and instructive; of the holy sacrifice of the Mass; of the Divine Presence in the Most Holy Eucharist; of the supernatural nourishment of their soul in holy communion; of the remission of sins in the Sacrament of Penance; of the grace of the Sacrament of Matrimony; of the sacramental power of the priesthood, and at the hour of death, of the consoling grace and strengthening of Extreme Unction. In that dread hour they can receive remission of their sins only by perfect contrition, which presupposes a more effi-

cacious grace than is obtained through attrition, which latter, however, would suffice for their salvation when joined with the reception of the Sacrament of Penance.

Examples

LORD MACAULAY ON THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

"The history of the Roman Catholic Church joins together the two great ages of civilization. No other institution is left standing which carries the mind back to the times when the smoke of sacrifice rose from the Pantheon, and when camelopards and tigers bounded in the Flavian amphitheater. The proudest royal houses are but of yesterday when compared with the line of supreme Pontiffs. That line we trace in an unbroken series from the Pope who crowned Napoleon, in the nineteenth century, to the Pope who crowned Pepin, in the eighth; and far beyond the time of Pepin the august dynasty extends, till it is lost in the twilight of fable.* The republic of Venice came next in antiquity. But the republic of Venice was modern when compared with the Papacy; and the republic of Venice is gone, and the Papacy remains. The Papacy remains, not in decay, not a mere antique, but full of life and vigor. The Catholic Church is still sending forth to the farther ends of the world missionaries as zealous as those who

*Macauley was a Protestant.

landed in Kent with Augustine, and still confronting hostile kings with the same spirit with which she confronted Attila. The number of her children is greater than at any former age. . . . Nor do we see any sign which indicates that the term of her long dominion is approaching. She saw the commencement of all the governments and of all the ecclesiastical establishments that now exist in the world; and we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all. She was great and respected before the Saxon had set foot on Britain, before the Frank had passed the Rhine, when Grecian eloquence still flourished at Antioch, when idols were still worshiped in the temple of Mecca; and she may still exist in undiminished vigor when some traveler from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's."

THE IMMIGRANT

A young man, induced by hopes of preferment and wealth which he imagined to be realized beyond the ocean, left his home and country and landed, after a long and stormy voyage, in the harbor of New York. Deserted by all his friends, he stood alone, ignorant of the language of the country, deprived of means, and not knowing what to do. Sauntering along a busy street, he heard the sound of a bell. Following it, he soon found himself in a Catholic Church. The priest,

clothed in the sacred vestments, had just arrived at the altar and was about to begin the holy sacrifice of the Mass. The choir sang the *Kyrie*, and when it was ended the priest intoned the *Gloria*. Filled with joy and gratitude, the poor stranger raised his heart to God in prayer, saying: "O holy, divine Church, how grand thou art! In this far-off country I hear thy liturgical language like at home. I assist at the same Holy Sacrifice, and listen to the same divine praises. O wonderful unity, O divine harmony! I feel alone and abandoned no longer: I have my faith, my Church, her blessings and consolations. Thanks be to Thee, my Father, who art in heaven."

LUTHER AND MELANCTHON ON THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

In his treatise "On Private Mass" Luther declares that the Catholic Church is the true Church, the pillar and ground of truth. He says, "I confess that under the Papacy are many good things; nay, all that is good in Christianity: the true Scriptures, true baptism, the true Sacrament of the Altar, the true keys for the remission of sins, the true office of preaching. Nay, I say that in the Papacy is true Christianity, even the very kernel of Christianity."

Melancthon, Luther's zealous co-operator, acknowledged the Catholic Church to be the true Church; and when his Catholic mother asked him

about changing her religion, he advised her to remain as she was, remarking: "Our religion is, indeed, more agreeable, but yours is more secure." And she died a Catholic.



THE BLESSED VIRGIN AND HER DIVINE CHILD

*Virgin mother of God, most holy Mary, safe refuge of
sinners, intercede for us with thy Divine Child.*

CHAPTER III

The Constitution of the Church

CHRIST's purpose in founding the Church was that she continue the work of man's salvation and procure eternal happiness for him. Christ's office was threefold: He was *Prophet*, *Priest* and *King*. As Prophet He proclaimed the doctrine which *leads* to eternal life; as priest He, by His sacrificial blood and death, took away sin and *gave* us eternal life; as King He *governs* His own unto eternal life.

The Church was instituted to exercise the same three functions. The apostles and their successors were appointed to the office of *prophet*, to teach the doctrine of Christ to the nations; they were appointed to the office of *priest*, to offer anew Christ's Sacrifice, to cleanse men from sin and to sanctify them by the sacraments; they were appointed to the office of *king*, to govern and direct the faithful, and thus to lead them to heaven.

The Church is truly called the Mother of the Faithful, because she instils into them the life of the soul and instructs them as a mother does her child. The mother gives to the child the life of the body; the Church, by baptism, instils into her children sanctifying grace, which is the true life of the soul. It is a mother's duty to educate

her children. When the father goes on a journey, he leaves to his children their mother, and delegates his authority over them to her. Christ did the same: leaving this world, He gave to us the Church as our mother and invested her with His own full authority. The Church educates man for heaven by exercising the threefold office to which she was appointed by Christ. She exercises the office of prophet by preaching His doctrine, the office of priest by offering the holy sacrifice of the Mass and by administering the sacraments; the office of king by governing and directing the faithful.

The prophetic office of the Church, therefore, consists in her authority to preach, and in its inherent duty of continuing to announce the divine truths to their full extent, and of propagating them everywhere, so that all mankind may come to the knowledge of the true God, and of His Son, whom He sent: Jesus Christ, Truth Eternal. With the prophetic office of the Church is, moreover, connected the duty of preserving the faithful from error, of refuting and condemning heretics, and denouncing heresies. Therefore the Church is free from liability to error in her office of teaching. This infallibility of her teaching consists in the protection which the Holy Ghost continually exercises over her ministry, guarding her from all erroneous doctrine. Thus, according to the holy Fathers, the office of teaching was always understood in the Church.

The office of priest, in its full extent, comprises the authority to offer up the unbloody Sacrifice of the New Law—Holy Mass; to remit sin; to impart the Holy Ghost to the faithful by the imposition of hands, and to administer all the other means of salvation and blessings entrusted to the Church. All these faculties were always exercised by the apostles and their successors, but were never permitted to laymen, because they are not priests in the proper sense.

The kingly office is exercised by the Church through her pastors, who direct the faithful in the way of eternal life. It consists in the authority to govern the faithful individually and collectively in the name of Christ; to guard them in danger, to protect them from false doctrines, to impart to them wholesome spiritual nourishment, and to correct the recalcitrant by the imposition of penalties. It is one of the duties of a shepherd to separate infected sheep from his flock: thus it is also the duty of the pastors of the Church to separate from her communion unworthy and rebellious members. And as the shepherd may readmit expelled sheep to his flock when the cause for their expulsion ceases, thus the pastors of the Church also have the power to reinstate excommunicated members, if they make reparation and contritely seek reconciliation.

Membership in the Church is acquired by faith and baptism: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (*Mark* xvi. 16.) Adults are

capable of fulfilling both conditions; they must therefore "believe and be baptized." Baptism without acceptance of the doctrine is not enough to make them members of the Church. Infants can not make an act of faith; therefore it is not required of them, and baptism alone makes them members of the Church. Because, in adults, faith *and* baptism are conditions of membership in the Church, unbaptized, or not validly baptized, persons do not belong to her. The baptized children, however, of sectarian Christians belong to her; for baptism is the property of the Church: therefore the fruits accruing from this property can belong nowhere else but to the Church producing them. When, however, baptized children, after attaining the age of reason, profess adherence to the doctrines of their sect, they thereby renounce the Church and cease to belong to her. By a parity of reasoning, if an adult is validly baptized and accepts the doctrine of Christ as far as he can know it, though it is presented to him by a sect which he inculpably mistakes for the Church of Christ, he receives the sanctifying effects of baptism, and thereby belongs to the *soul* of the Church. But not being outwardly in her communion, he is not a member of her body, and is therefore debarred from her other sacraments.

A Catholic, then, is a person who, being baptized and believing the doctrines of the Church, professes his faith, observes the commandments of God and the Church, receives the sacraments

and prays to God in the manner prescribed by Christ. As a member of the Church the Catholic has *rights* and *duties*. He has the *right* to all the graces, and therefore to all the means of grace deposited in the Church. He is entitled to hear the preaching of the word of God, to the administration of the sacraments, to assist at divine service, to Christian burial. His *duties*, succinctly stated, are: he is bound in conscience to obey his ecclesiastical superiors in all spiritual matters, to contribute toward their temporal support and toward the maintenance of churches, schools, divine worship, etc. The Church compels no one to join her communion, but whoever voluntarily retains membership in her is bound to submit to her laws. Who refuses to do so is liable, under certain conditions, to excommunication. Excommunication is the penalty inflicted by the Church for grievous crimes and contumacious infractions of discipline. It deprives its subject of the sacraments, of a share in the public suffrages, and of other spiritual privileges. When the penalty of excommunication for an act is fixed beforehand, it is incurred *ipso facto*, by the commission of that act; for instance, by apostasy from the Faith, neglect of fulfilling the Easter duty, membership in forbidden societies, etc. When excommunication is inflicted *after* a forbidden act was committed, it is preceded by repeated warnings, and sentence is pronounced only after due judicial investigation.

Concerning the Church, it is not sufficient for a Catholic to believe only what everybody can discover by the use of his reasoning powers and through the evidence of his senses, *viz.*, that a Church or community exists whose members believe in Christ and are called Christians; that the members of this community, though dispersed in all parts of the world, are united by the profession of the same faith, have the same sacraments and are governed by one supreme head; that many of them lead holy lives, etc. These facts may be known as well to pagans, Jews, and infidels. The Catholic must moreover believe and profess that this Church is a divine institution, of perpetual duration; that the Holy Ghost continues to dwell with her, to enlighten and protect her from all error; that He directs, governs, and sanctifies her, and that everybody owes implicit faith in and obedience to her, as he does to Christ, who speaks, teaches, and governs through her.

Let us often consider the inestimable grace of being a member of the Catholic Church. Let us not, however, exalt ourselves in vainglory over those who are outside the Church. Let us not judge them, for by pride and uncharitableness we might prevent them from learning to know the true Church, and we ourselves might, in punishment, incur the risk of losing our faith. St. Augustine, in his explanation of Psalm xxxii, writes: "We exhort you most urgently to love those that are outside the Church. Let us have

compassion on them, as on our brethren." And in his Commentary on Psalm lxxv he exclaims: "If the voice of your bishop prevails with you, we beseech you all not to scoff at those who do not belong to the Church: whether they be heathens who as yet do not believe in Christ, or such as have severed themselves from the mystical body of Christ. Rather pray for them, that they also may enter Christ's fold, for He is mighty enough to lead them into it."

OBJECTIONS

1. *The priesthood is a human invention. It is characterized by a love of power and by greediness.*

The priesthood was instituted by the Founder of the Church, Our Lord Jesus Christ. He who rejects it, rejects God and Christ Himself. Apostasy is, as a rule, the result of priest hatred. The crimes with which the members of the priesthood are most generally charged are: Ambition, tyranny, avarice, and immorality. Why? Because the priest is a man of authority, and the unbeliever rebels against all authority. The priest is a man of religion, and the unbeliever hates religion. The priest, by his vow of celibacy, proves the possibility of a chaste life, which the unbeliever denies. The priest exerts a healthy moral influence on the faithful; the unbeliever claims liberty for himself, but denies it to the Catholic Church. For these and similar reasons the infidel

hates the priesthood. The priesthood and the unbeliever are at war with each other, because as long as the priest shall have influence with the people infidelity shall not prevail.

True, there have been, and are, immoral, ambitious, grasping clergymen: there was a Judas Iscariot even amongst the apostles. But to condemn for this reason the entire priesthood is absurd and malicious. They who rob the people of millions are to be sought and will be found elsewhere.

2. *Excommunication, as practised in the Catholic Church, is a tyranny.*

The right of exclusion of contumacious members is claimed and exercised by every secular society: members remiss in their duties are expelled, and even the courts recognize the right of expulsion for cause. The Church, when she makes use of this her right, exercises the power of excommunication in a mild and conciliatory manner, although she by no means is guilty of neglect of duty or of weakness. A shepherd who, from heedless compassion for one sheep, should expose the whole flock to the danger of infection, is guilty of cruelty. St. Paul was mild and indulgent, but when there was question of preserving from infection the Christian community of Corinth, he was firm and resolute. But having secured the welfare of the offender and of the community, his rigor relaxed and changed into paternal tenderness. He had inflicted punish-

ment in the name of Christ, and then granted pardon in His name.

It is a calumny to accuse the Church of cursing or damning anybody by excommunication. The excommunicated person is deprived only of spiritual privileges, not of *every* divine grace. He may, by penance, return at any time to the communion of the Church; hence he is not a reprobate. If by his own choice he dies in excommunication, he will be damned, just as every Catholic is damned who dies in mortal sin unrepented. It is his own fault, not that of the Church.

Example

A TOUCHING LETTER

In the year 1820, the statesman and author, Carl Ludwig von Haller, Chancellor of the republic of Berne, Switzerland, was converted to the Catholic Faith. Deposed, on that account, from his office, he was compelled to go abroad. In Paris he wrote a letter to his still Protestant family, in which the following beautiful sentiments are expressed:

“You grieve at my conversion, because you believe that the Catholic Church consigns Protestants to damnation. Oh, how little you know the immense love of this kind mother! She does not condemn your person, but your errors, and the false principles with which you are imbued. Instead of hating, she loves you; and although

you are estranged from her, she nevertheless calls you her children—you, who never call Catholics by the endearing name of brethren. Daily she prays for you. She mourns the loss of so many dear children, whom she sees deprived of so many means of grace and committed to false doctrines. All the sects conspire against her, not in communion of faith, but in communion of hatred. By this very fact I recognize her as the true Church, because all heretics, contradictory among each other as they may be, are one in their hatred against the Church. She alone returns love for hatred, and requites their insults by consoling and aiding the afflicted without regard to their creed. Has a true Catholic ever done you a wrong? On my part, I must confess that during all my life I was treated kindly by them, and I can not hate those who love me."

CHAPTER IV

The Visible Head of the Church: the Roman Pontiff, or Pope.

ACCORDING to the clearly expressed promise of Christ, the Church is to continue, despite the attacks of the powers of hell, till the end of the world. Therefore the rock upon which she is built must also endure if the building is not to collapse. This rock is Peter: hence Peter must continue to be the foundation of the Church. Peter, however, as a human being, was subject to death, and died: hence the continuity of the foundation can relate only to his legitimate successor.

This legitimate successor of St. Peter and visible head of the Church is the Bishop of Rome. He is called the *Supreme Pontiff*, or *Pope*, which latter word signifies *Father*. History proves that St. Peter established his episcopal See at Rome, and occupied it at the time of his death. The writings of the early Fathers, and numerous memorials, among which is the tomb of St. Peter, exclude every reasonable doubt concerning this fact. Now, as in an elective government the person legitimately elected is the lawful successor of his predecessor, thus also the person succeeding to the chair of St. Peter by legitimate election

came into his office, his dignity, all his prerogatives and his full authority. The Vatican Council expresses itself as follows on this point: "If any one say that it is not by the institution of Christ Our Lord Himself—that is, by divine right—that St. Peter has an unbroken line of successors in the Primacy over the whole Church, or that the Roman Pontiff is not the successor of St. Peter in the same Primacy, let him be anathema."

By his Primacy the Pope holds the highest rank of honor in the Church. "The Pope is the first of high priests, the prince among the bishops," says St. Bernard. The Pope, representing no longer the suffering Redeemer on the cross, but the King of Glory in heaven, has the following prerogatives of honor: He takes a new name, just as the first Pope received a new name when he was appointed by Christ, and is reminded thereby that he should devote himself entirely to his office. Since the tenth century the Popes select names only of their predecessors, from whom they are distinguished by numerals. The name of Peter, however, is never taken by a Pope, in reverence for the first Vicar of Christ.

Besides the highest rank of honor, the Pope also possesses the plenitude of power in the Church. As teacher of the Church and as supreme pastor of the whole flock and their pastors, he exercises the highest power of jurisdiction in relation to faith and morals, to the dis-

cipline and government of the Church. His authority extends to each individual church or diocese, to every bishop and pastor. Therefore he can appoint and depose bishops, convene councils, approve Religious Orders, send out missionaries, grant dispensations and privileges, and reserve to himself the faculty of absolving from certain sins. For the same reason he is free to hold communication with the Church in the whole world, to teach the way of salvation, and to demand obedience of the faithful. As supreme judge of the faithful he settles all disputes, and his judgment may be appealed to.

His relation to a General or Ecumenical Council can be briefly stated as follows: The Council has no other power but that which the Pope gives it; but it gives him strong moral support. As representing the whole teaching body of the Church, it can not err in matters of faith. The right to convoke such a Council belongs to the Pope alone; and without his consent or ratification it is no General Council. The legislation of a Council, emanating from all the bishops and approved by the Pope, will be more effective and more easily put into practice than if it had been promulgated by the Pope alone. Hence Councils were often convened for the consideration of matters already decided by the Pope. And again, the Popes often pronounced definitions only after having convoked a Council.

A Council may exercise a certain influence on

a Pope: it may judge and even censure his acts. Thus the Sixth General Council censured Pope Honorius for his attitude toward the Monothelites. But even in such a case the Council possesses no authority over the Pope. For just as well as a Council, a later Pope can cancel what one of his predecessors enacted, and it may happen that a later Council censures a former one for neglecting certain measures: and yet no one can say, on this account, one Pope has greater authority than another or that one Council is superior to another.

In the authority of the Pope and in that of the General Council we possess two supreme powers, not subordinate to one another, and yet not fully independent of each other.

From the above explanation it is evident that the Pope must preside, either in person or by his representative, at a General Council, and further proof of this fact is superfluous.

The Pope, then, has no judge on earth. A Papal Decree of October 12, 1869 declares any one excommunicated who should presume to appeal from the authority of the Pope to a General Council.

And in our days, when the attacks on the divine authority of the Holy See are constantly renewed, in order, if possible, to destroy the Church and to withdraw the faithful from the union with her visible head, the Vatican Council issued the following decree: "Whoever says that the Roman

Pontiff possesses solely the office of supervision or direction, and not the full and supreme power of jurisdiction over the whole Church, not only in matters of faith and morals, but also in matters concerning the discipline and government of the Church, or that he is invested merely with a greater part, but not with the plenitude of supreme power; or that his authority is not a direct and immediate one over all the churches and over all the faithful: let him be anathema."

If, then, the Pope is not governed by a Council, because his authority is, of itself, not less than that of the Council over which he presides, the logical conclusion is that the Pope, the head of the Church teaching, is *infallible* in his decisions concerning faith and morals. Hence the Vatican Council (Sess. iv. ch. 4) issued the following decree: "When the Roman Pontiff speaks *ex cathedra*, that is, when he exercises his office as supreme pastor and teacher of the faithful, and in virtue of his authority promulgates a doctrine concerning faith or morals to be accepted by the whole Church, he enjoys, by the assistance of the Holy Ghost promised to him in the person of St. Peter, that infallibility with which our Divine Redeemer invested His Church in definitions relating to faith and morals; and therefore the definitions of the Roman Pontiff are, of themselves, and not through the consent of the Church, irreformable."

Here we have a clear statement of what the infallibility of the Pope does *not* mean and what it *does* mean.

1. The infallibility of the Pope does *not* mean that the Pope is inspired, or endowed with divine revelation like the apostles and the writers of Holy Scripture. The Holy Ghost was not promised to the successors of St. Peter in order that they might spread abroad a new doctrine which He reveals, but that, under His assistance, they might guard inviolably and explain faithfully the revelation or deposit of faith handed down by the apostles.

2. Papal infallibility does *not* mean that the Pope is impeccable or specially exempt from liability to sin. He, too, when beginning to celebrate Mass, says at the foot of the altar: "I confess to Almighty God, and to all His saints, that I have sinned in thought, word, and deed."

3. Infallibility is an attribute of the Pope, *not* in his capacity as a private teacher, but only in his official capacity, when he judges of faith and morals as head of the Church.

4. The infallibility of the Pope, being restricted to questions of faith and morals, does *not* extend to the natural sciences, unless where error is presented under the false name of science, and arrays itself against revealed truth.

5. The Pope's infallibility does *not* in any way trespass on the civil authority; for his jurisdiction belongs to spiritual matters, while the duty

of the state is to provide for the temporal welfare of its subjects.

What, then, is the real doctrine of Papal infallibility? It means that the Pope, as successor of St. Peter, by virtue of the premises of Christ, is preserved from error when he promulgates to the Church a decision of faith and morals. The Pope is not the maker of the divine law; he is only its interpreter. All revelation came from God to His apostles, and was complete in the beginning of the Church; but when the Pope speaks as Christ's vicar on earth, he is guided in a special manner by the Holy Ghost.

A Papal definition or decree issued under the above conditions is infallible and immutable in itself and not through its subsequent acceptance by the Church. Its binding force, moreover, depends not on a previous consultation or concurrence of the bishops, nor on a previous study of the sources of revelation. True, it is the Pope's duty to apply all natural and supernatural means at his command—study and prayer—to arrive at the truth; for his definitions are not inspirations proper, but the result of his investigation, in conjunction with the supernatural illumination by the Holy Ghost.

The Primacy and the infallibility of the Pope are so intimately connected with each other that they stand and fall together; hence they are treated here jointly.

Supreme in spiritual authority, the Pope is also

independent of temporal rulers. For centuries the Popes were themselves sovereigns of the states of the Church. The temporal power of the Pope is necessary for the perfect freedom and independence of the Holy See; a fact which was recognized by the first Christian emperors. Therefore they endowed the Church with large properties and the Popes attained a certain sovereignty in Rome and central Italy. In 754 the Frankish King Pepin formally transferred Rome and a number of other cities on the eastern shore of Italy to the Church, which gift was confirmed by his son, Emperor Charles the Great, A.D. 774. Seventeen times the Popes lost the states of the Church, but always recovered them. In 1859, Pope Pius IX was again despoiled of them, and confined to the city of Rome. And in 1870 even this was taken possession of by the Government of Italy. Since then the Pope is confined to the Vatican. Small as this territory is, he is a sovereign there, independent of any other ruler, but dependent on the alms of the faithful for the means wherewith to conduct the government of the Church. These contributions, from all parts of the world, are called Peter's Pence. Although the Pope at present is deprived of the states of the Church, he is nevertheless recognized as a sovereign; he is represented at various courts by ambassadors, nuncios, legates, etc., and holds immunity from secular courts.

The chair of St. Peter stands immovable amid

the storms of the times. Let our sentiments toward it be like those that inspired Bossuet to exclaim: "O holy Roman Church, mother of churches and mother of the faithful Church, in which God unites forever His children in one and the same love; we shall forever continue one with thee. Let me rather forget myself than thee, O holy Roman Church!"

OBJECTIONS

1. *To err is human: the Pope is a man, therefore he may err.*

Read the explanation of the Pope's infallibility and blush at the silliness of your objection. Every man, by nature, is sinful and liable to err; but this does not preclude the possibility of an exception made by God to preserve His Church from error. And this latter exception He made, and we call it Papal infallibility.

2. *If the Pope is not subject to a General Council, an erroneous definition made by him can not be revoked.*

A General Council legitimately assembled can not err in matters of faith and morals; it represents the infallible Church. If it can not err, the Pope can not confirm and promulgate as erroneous any of its definitions; for the same divine assistance that preserves the Church from error also protects the Pope against it.

3. *The temporal power of the Popes was rather an impediment than a help to the Church.*

It belongs to the Church, and not to her enemies, to decide whether the possession of temporal power is necessary or advantageous for her liberty and welfare. Pius IX, who was despoiled of the states of the Church, repeatedly protested against the doctrine of those who deemed the independence of the Holy See unnecessary. Pope Leo XIII in 1891 wrote to the Austrian bishops: "Your anxiety is increased also because of the Roman Pontiff's deprivation of liberty, which, in truth, is a condition destructive both of the dignity of the Apostolic See and of the welfare of religion. Continue in your efforts for the redress of this disastrous evil."

As the District of Columbia, the seat of the General Government of the United States, is independent of all States of the Union, so should the seat of the general government of the Church be independent of all countries of the world.

Example

ST. BERNARD'S LETTER TO POPE EUGENE III

After the elevation of Pope Eugene III to the Papal chair, St. Bernard, his former teacher, addressed to him a letter on the dignity and power of the Supreme Pontiff. In the course of his remarks he said: "Let us, then, consider somewhat more attentively the position which you now occupy in the Church of God. Who, then, are you? You are the high priest, the chief of high priests. You are the prince among the bishops,

the heir of the apostles. In precedence you are Abel, in government Noah, in patriarchy Abraham, in order Melchisedech, in dignity Aaron, in power Moses, in judgeship Samuel, in authority Peter, in anointment Christ. You have received the keys of heaven, to you was entrusted the flock. True, there are others who unlock heaven, others who are shepherds; but your title is more glorious. Others have flocks entrusted to them, each one his own; but to you all are entrusted. You are not only the shepherd of the flock, but the shepherd of shepherds. The authority of others is limited, yours extends even to those who have authority over others. Your prerogatives, therefore, are unassailable."

CHAPTER V

The Legislative Power, and the Precepts of the Church

THE Church is a society whose members are united for a definite purpose, *viz.*, for the attainment of their temporal welfare and of their eternal salvation, under the direction and guidance of ecclesiastical teachers and pastors. Every society adopts certain rules and laws, which all members must observe and obey. To this no reasonable person will object. Applied to the Church, the logical result of this fact is that to her, too, must belong the right to establish certain laws which are binding on her members.

Again, the Church is a kingdom, established by Christ to embrace all mankind, and to last to the end of time. A government can not exist without legislative power and laws: thus also the kingdom of Christ, the Church, can not exist without legislative authority to determine and enact, at the proper time, whatever is calculated to promote the welfare of the faithful. Hence St. Augustine says: "The true religion can not exist if it is not invested with power and authority to command whatever it deems necessary for man's salvation, and to which all must submit in full obedience."

But even if the very nature of the Church did not include legislative power, we yet should be

obliged to acknowledge and submit to it, because it emanates from divine authority, and belongs to the teaching, priestly and pastoral office of the Church. Certainly no one knew better than the apostles the extent of the power with which Christ invested them. Witness them, then, exercising *legislative* power soon after His ascension. The question arose concerning the observance of the Mosaic law by converts from paganism. After a short consultation the apostles resolved: "It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us to lay no further burden upon you than these necessary things: that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication." (*Acts* xv. 28, 29.) This declaration proves that the apostles considered themselves invested by divine right with legislative power. In the epistles of St. Paul, too, we are informed that he frequently exercised legislative power.

What the apostles did at the beginning of Christianity, the same was and is done by their successors up to the present time. The very fact that the Church claims legislative power proves that Christ conferred it upon her: she would be guilty of a grievous error in exercising a power which she had not received; and erring in so momentous a question, she would not be the true Church of Christ.

She, then, has legislative power: but if she has it, to be of practical value she must also have the

right to insist on the observance of her laws. This right is explicitly vindicated to her by St. Paul writing to his disciple Timothy: "Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine." (2 *Tim.* iv. 2.) The same apostle, severely punishing disobedience, declares that he did so "in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ," and "in the power of Our Lord Jesus." (1 *Cor.* v. 4.)

This right, moreover, is necessary for the preservation of the Church. Were she not permitted to make laws and to correct and punish their transgressors, she would lose her whole authority, and in addition expose herself to the ridicule of those who despise her, which certainly would lead to her destruction.

Again, the Church must have legislative power for the purpose of correcting and reclaiming wrongdoers. Such must be exhorted and made sensible of their misdeeds, must be corrected and led back into the path of salvation. This is the purpose aimed at by the punishments inflicted by the Church. After attaining it, she readily withdraws from severity. Thus we read of St. Paul, that after he had punished the incestuous Corinthian by excommunication, he restored him to her communion when he had done penance. The Apostle writes: "To him that is such a one, this rebuke is sufficient, that is given by many: so that contrariwise you should rather pardon and comfort him, lest perhaps such an one is swallowed

up with overmuch sorrow. For which I beseech you, that you would confirm your charity toward him." (2 Cor. ii. 6-8.)

The punishments inflicted by the Church for contumacious disobedience are solely of a spiritual nature. She recognizes corporal punishments only in so far as a sinner may undergo them voluntarily and by choice. She has no prisons, no instruments of torture. She restricts herself to depriving the sinner of the spiritual treasures entrusted to her by Christ for the good of the faithful. Can anything be more reasonable, more legitimate? What can be more equitable than the declaration of the Church: "He who disobeys me shall no longer bear my name or enjoy my benefits"?

We now come to the questions: Who is bound to obey the precepts of the Church? And what does this duty imply?

It is evident that the Church has the right to impose precepts that bind her members, and that the latter must accept and obey them. This is stated clearly and emphatically by the Council of Trent: "Whosoever says that those baptized are free from the observance of the precepts of the Church, except they submit to them by choice: let him be anathema."

Therefore the precepts of the Church differ, in a way, from the commandments of God. These are binding on all men, without exception, and remain in force as long as the human race shall

exist on earth. Hence their solemn promulgation by God, who, as St. Paul writes, said: "I will give my laws in their hearts, and on their minds I will write them." (*Heb. x. 16.*) The precepts of the Church bind only her members, on whom alone she imposes duties.

Concerning the obligation of obeying the Church, Christ Himself declared: "If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican." (*Matt. xviii. 17.*) That is: He who refuses to obey the Church is, as to guilt, like the heathen and public sinner refusing to be converted. As little as they can enter eternal life, even so little hopes of heaven has he who refuses to obey the Church. Consequently the precepts of the Church have strictly binding force; that is, they are obligatory under pain of mortal sin: for from the severity of the penalty imposed we must judge the importance of the duty neglected. We incur eternal reprobation only by the transgression of a strictly binding precept.

A third question to be answered is: Are the precepts of the Church so numerous and so difficult that we may be reasonably excused from their observance?

The Catholic Church numbers over two hundred millions of members—and how many paragraphs does her book of laws contain? Six in all! The commandments of God do not come into consideration here, for it is evident that the Church can not release us from obedience to them.

Six precepts, then, are all that the Church declares binding on her members of the laity; the rest of her legislation concerns the clergy. And what are these precepts? Are they so very difficult to observe?

1. By the *first precept* of the Church we are commanded to assist devoutly at Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation. Is this demanding too much? Is it too difficult? How do we obey the third commandment of God if we do not observe this precept? Does he keep holy the Lord's day who on it not even assists devoutly at Mass?

2. By the *second precept* the Church commands us to fast and abstain on the days appointed. After attaining the age of twenty-one and not being excused by reason of hard labor or other good cause, we are to fast on certain days; that is, we are to content ourselves with one full meal; and on the Friday of each week, as also on some other days, we are to abstain from flesh meat. If our manner of living were more rational we would be mindful throughout the whole year that we do not live to eat, but eat to live; we would be content with what is necessary. The precept of abstinence on Friday is given us to remind us of the cruel death of Our Lord on the cross; its purpose is to impress upon us the necessity of self-denial, without which we can not partake of the fruits of redemption.

3. By the *third precept* of the Church we are

required to confess our sins at least once a year. The Sacrament of Penance was instituted by Christ for the remission of sins: is it unreasonable of the Church when she demands that we at least once a year approach the tribunal of penance and mercy to readjust the affairs of our conscience with the representative of God?

4. By her *fourth precept* the Church commands that we receive the Most Holy Eucharist during Easter time. Our divine Saviour instituted this ineffable mystery for the nourishment of our souls, and declares: "Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you." (*John vi. 54.*) Calling yourself a Catholic, can you find fault with the Church for insisting that you do this at least once a year?

5. The *fifth precept* of the Church reminds Catholics of their duty to contribute toward the support of their pastors. This precept applies to countries where, in consequence of the separation of Church and state, the latter makes no provision for the expenses of divine cult, for the maintenance of the clergy and for the Christian education of children. Every reasoning mind must find it just and equitable. It is founded on the words of St. Paul: "So also the Lord ordained that they who preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel." (*1 Cor. ix. 14.*)

6. Finally, the Church commands not to marry persons who are not Catholics, or who are related

to each other within the fourth degree of kindred; or to contract marriage before a sectarian minister or a civil magistrate; or to contract it privately without witnesses, and not to solemnize marriage at forbidden times. We shall explain this precept in the instruction on the Sacrament of Matrimony.

If the world had always conscientiously observed these precepts of the Church, society would be happier than it is. Mutual relations would be more friendly and peaceful, and the number of crimes would be materially lessened. But for the sake of escaping ridicule, of indulging in selfishness, the laws of the Church are set at naught, God is offended, and eternal salvation is jeopardized. Can there be greater folly than this? Let us, therefore, observe the precepts of the Church as conscientiously as we obey the commandments of God. St. Augustine writes: "He who disobeys so kind a mother will sue for grace and mercy in vain with our heavenly Father."

OBJECTIONS

1. *The precepts of the Church are human laws.*

True, the precepts of the Church were formulated by men; but they were men of whom St. Paul writes: "Take heed to yourselves and to the whole flock wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops to rule the Church of God." (*Acts* xx. 28.) They therefore gave these precepts by divine authority.

2. *To enforce her laws the Church instituted the Inquisition.*

What is the Inquisition? The word means to inquire, to investigate, to examine. In the sense in which the word is used here, the Inquisition means an ecclesiastical court instituted for the purpose of discovering those who threaten to corrupt the faith and morals of Catholics. This Inquisition was introduced A.D. 1229. During the Middle Ages Catholics—nations as well as rulers—considered the Church whose head is the Roman Pontiff as the Catholic, the only true Church, and her doctrines and principles as the only correct ones. Whoever at that time attacked the Catholic faith assaulted also the state. Hence the Christian state considered every attack on the Faith as an attack also on its rights, and punished it as treason. The doctrine and practice of many heretics in the Middle Ages were indeed so scandalous that the state, in its own interest, was compelled to insure the safety of public morals by their suppression. To-day the state suppresses anarchists and revolutionists: why reproach the medieval state for doing the same in order to ward off the attacks of enemies?

The right of the *Church* to employ the Inquisition appears from the following: Every legitimate society has the right of self-preservation. Consequently it also has the right to correct and punish those of its members who attempt its disturbance and destruction. There is no family in

which even the most tender father and the most loving mother does not employ, besides promises and rewards, also threats and punishments, in order to recall their children to duty and to encourage them in good behavior. The Church has the same right, and employs the same means; therefore there is nothing objectionable in the principles that led to the introduction of the Inquisition.

But the Inquisition is accused of being guilty of the most atrocious cruelties. The indictment may be true of *some* of the Inquisitors, but it is true by no means of *all*. Where is there a human institution whose agency is not subject to being perverted? The ecclesiastical councils and synods, and above all the Popes, were always in favor of mild methods toward the subjects of the Inquisition, despite the severity of the penal code of the Middle Ages. The Popes ordained that no one should be imprisoned before evidence of his guilt had been found; that the accused should be treated humanely, and that the diocesan bishop must be advised before the prisoner was sentenced, besides other measures for the protection of the accused. Moreover, even the enemies of the Church concede that the prisons of the Inquisition were comfortable, well lighted and ventilated at a time when such places all over Europe were dark, musty, and ill-furnished.

We must remember, too, that the Inquisition as practised in the Church and the Inquisition en-

forced by the Spanish Government are quite distinct. The Spanish Inquisition was a state affair, and investigated offenses against the state as well as those against the Church. It was established in 1478, to punish the apostate Jews in Spain who openly, for gain and preferment, professed Christianity and secretly continued to practice Judaism and favored the Moors and Mohammedans.

In judging the Inquisition we must, moreover, consider the time when it flourished. The culprit, after conviction by the ecclesiastical judges, was handed over for punishment to the state's tribunal. To-day this punishment may appear more severe than just; but there are two reasons for its severity. First, in that "barbaric" age God's honor was held in higher esteem than in our day. Blasphemy, sacrilege, and apostasy were then not deemed trifles; they were crimes, and it was a crime to incite others thereto. An offense against God and His law was an outrage against society, which considered itself amenable to God. Secondly, the laws at that time were much more rigorous than at present, and therefore the punishment for transgressing them was severe in proportion.

3. *In our time the precept of fasting and abstinence is obsolete.*

Fasting is prescribed both in the Old and in the New Law. Christ Himself fasted and enjoined fasting by word and example. It is a most meritorious work. It overcomes temptation and

makes prayer more effectual. It is appropriate for our age as well as for the past; because we, too, need strength for the combat against sin and for prayer. For this reason the Church appointed certain seasons of fasting and abstinence and makes their observance obligatory. Yet in consideration of the enfeebled condition of the people of the present day, and with due regard for the circumstances of the times, the Church greatly mitigated her former rigor: she exempts the young and the very old, the sick, the feeble, and the laboring class. But, as a principle, she upholds the practice of fasting and abstinence.

4. *What is the purpose of forbidding the eating of flesh meat on Fridays?*

To show obedience to the precept of the Church; to show that you are able to overcome your appetite in token of your submission to her law; to give you an opportunity of self-denial. Eating meat is in itself an indifferent matter; but eating it in contempt of the precept of the Church is a sin of disobedience, and, according to circumstances, also of scandal. Abstinence on Friday was prescribed to remind us of our redemption by Christ's death on the cross: "He was obedient unto death"; and it is quite appropriate that we show our gratitude to Him by an act of obedience.

Examples

THE CONVERTED OFFICER

A Catholic officer in the army, though well in-

structed in the Faith, neglected the observance of the precepts of the Church, and imitating the example of his comrades, even ridiculed religion and its practices. Finally, however, the grace of God touched him, and remembering the teachings received in his youth, he made a good confession. Thenceforward he no longer was a scoffer, but a faithful observer of the precepts of the Church. One Friday he dined with a number of brother officers, who ridiculed him for not eating meat. He rejoined: "Dear friends, I belong to a society which demands of its members strict obedience to its laws. This society is the Catholic Church. She commands me to abstain from meat on Friday, and I obey her precept. Being men of common sense, and strict disciplinarians, you will not find fault with me."

A FEARLESS CHILD

A boy was invited to dine with friends during the week following his first communion. The day set for the dinner happened to be an ember day; nevertheless flesh meat was served. The boy refused it, observing the precept of the Church. A man in the company observed that the prohibition of eating meat on Friday was not a divine but merely a human law. The boy replied: "Yes, the precepts of the Church are human laws; but they were framed by men who were commissioned by Christ to rule His Church, and to whom He said, 'As the Father hath sent

me, thus I send you,' and: 'Whosoever heareth you heareth me, and whosoever despiseth you despiseth me; and whosoever despiseth me despiseth Him that sent me.' " The company admired the wisdom and courage shown by the boy's reply.

CHAPTER VI

Virtue and Good Works

VIRTUE is the opposite of vice. It is the readiness acquired by the constant practice in the performance of good actions, and the inclination of the will to good. The natural faculty of doing good works or the facility of performing them with the grace of God attained through practice is often also called virtue.

Virtue is attained and perfected only by constant struggle and self-denial; because concupiscence and other obstacles oppose it. Virtue alone, by making us true Christians, secures us happiness in this and the next world. St. Leo the Great writes: "Nobody can be called a true Christian who does not practise, to the extent of his ability, the virtues of Christ."

The name of virtue is applied to various ideas, each one of which bears its own distinctive character and designation. The virtues which appear in our relation to God are called *theological virtues*. They are faith, hope, and charity. They are supernatural virtues, or above the reach of our unaided nature, and are produced in us by the Holy Ghost. By the virtue of faith we receive from God the grace to believe in Him and in the truths which He has revealed; by the virtue of



THE HOLY FAMILY

*The Child grew and waxed strong, full of wisdom, and
the grace of God was in Him."*

hope we receive the grace to trust that He will give us eternal life and the means to attain it; by the virtue of charity we receive the grace to love God above all things for His own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves also for God's sake.

These virtues are called *theological* because God is their object, motive, and origin. God is the *object* of faith; for we believe what He has revealed for the reason that He is all-knowing and all-truthful. God is the *object* of hope; for we trust to attain the bliss of beholding and possessing Him forever after death, because God is almighty, all-truthful, and supremely good. God is the *object* of our charity, or love, for we love Him for His own sake, and love our neighbor for His sake. God is the *motive* of our faith because He has revealed Himself to us; of our hope, because we rely on His promises; of our charity, because we love Him as the Supreme Being. God is the *origin* of these three virtues because He infuses them into us together with sanctifying grace. When the Holy Ghost takes possession of the soul, He purifies it and strengthens it and thereby confirms us in faith, hope, and charity. But these virtues do not operate by compulsion, for we retain our full liberty. Moreover, the faculty of exercising them remains inactive in the soul until man attains the age of reason.

The virtues that cause our actions to be in harmony with the moral law are called *moral virtues*. They are called *moral* because they regulate our

moral deportment in a manner that makes it pleasing to God. We attain these virtues by the aid of God's grace and through our own exertions, after being prepared for them by sanctifying grace. The theological virtues bear direct relation to God; the moral virtues regulate our relation to ourselves and to our fellow-men. The former are *infused* into our soul together with sanctifying grace; the latter we must acquire by our own exertion, assisted by God's grace.

The principal moral virtues are the four cardinal virtues, *prudence*, *justice*, *temperance*, and *fortitude*. They are called *cardinal* from the Latin word *cardo*, which signifies a door-hinge; and it means virtues upon which hinges our entire moral life, just as the movement of the door depends upon its hinges.

Prudence is that mental faculty by which we are enabled to know what is the essential good and what the means are to attain it. *Justice* is the inclination of the will to rectitude. *Temperance* is the disposition to use the goods of this world only inasmuch as they serve to attain those of eternity. *Fortitude* is that virtue which enables us to bear any hardship or persecution rather than fail in our duty.

The greatest of all virtues is charity, or the love of God, because it unites man with God. It is the source of all other virtues; they receive their value from it, and it alone endures in the next life. Therefore he that does not possess

charity, who does not love God, possesses no virtue perfectly; but he who loves God possesses all virtues, though not in the same perfect degree. St. Augustine says: "Charity is the way by which God reaches man, and by which man reaches God." Love of God is the crown of all virtues, because it relates to God, knows Him and adores His perfections. No other virtue approaches it in value. Of it St. Augustine says: "Where the love of God is, it alone suffices; where it is not, everything else is wanting. Because of this its high value, the commandment of the love of God is the first and greatest commandment, the culmination and fulfilment of all commandments."

The virtues receive increase. The three theological virtues are increased by the augmentation of sanctifying grace. Hence the Church, in the collect for the thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost, prays: "Almighty and eternal God, give unto us increase of faith, hope, and charity: and that we may worthily obtain what Thou dost promise, make us love that which Thou dost command." By the increase of grace in the soul its facility in performing good works is enhanced and it is more and more inflamed with the love of God. "By repeated acts of the theological virtues," says St. Thomas Aquinas, "the soul is prepared for growth in virtue."

The moral virtues receive increase by the repeated performance of good works, and the inclination of the will to them is increased by the

augmentation of sanctifying grace. The perfection of virtue is diminished by relaxing in the fervor for performing good works. Virtue is entirely lost by the commission of a mortal sin, because thereby we lose the love of God, without which perfect virtue is impossible. We expose ourselves to the danger of losing virtue by exhibiting our good acts to public view. St. Gregory the Great says: "He who carries his treasure in the public road wishes to be robbed of it." St. Chrysostom writes: "Who publicly exhibits gold and wealth invites attack; thus also virtue exposed to public view encourages Satan to rob it." Hence, when we perform a good work in public our sole motive, aim, and intention must be the glory of God.

Virtue being the faculty of performing good works and the inclination of our will to them, presupposes their actual performance. Good works are human actions performed according to the will of God, with reference to Him and to the reward which He promised for them. However good an act may be, it is no good work except it be voluntary. Acts that are good in themselves, but not according to the will of God as to the manner, time or circumstances of their performance, are not good works. For instance, if a person uses the property of another to give alms; or if he prays when he ought to attend to some other duty, etc., he does not perform a good work. Moreover, acts that are done without ref-

erence to God are not good works in a supernatural sense, because wanting in the intention to please God. For instance, giving alms in order to escape further molestation: the act is good, but its motive is defective. To be a supernaturally good work its motive must be a supernatural one: the love of God, fulfilment of His will, the eternal reward promised, or the fear of punishment threatened for its omission.

An act performed from a mere temporal motive is without merit before God. Thus in the time of Christ the Pharisees performed good works in order to be seen and praised by men, for which Christ reproached them, saying: "Amen I say to you, they have received their reward." (*Matt.* vi. 2.) A good work is the more meritorious the less it is done from human respect or in expectancy of temporal advantage. Therefore he who assists poor persons unable to make a return, who performs a work unbeknown to others for God's sake alone, though the world despise him, his deed is great in the sight of God, because its motive was a supernatural one.

The more self-denial a good work demands, the more meritorious it is before God. Therefore Our Lord praised the poor widow's mite above the rich gifts of the wealthy: "And He saw also a certain poor widow casting in two brass mites. And He said: Verily I say to you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all." (*Luke* xxi. 2.) St. Francis de Sales writes: "The good

works in which we experience, internally or exteriorly, the greatest difficulties are the most meritorious before God." Again, the greater or less value of a good work depends on the degree of our love of God. St. John of the Cross says: "A trifling work done for the glory of God and in order to please Him is more acceptable to Him than a greater work done without this intention. God regards not the extent of our work, but the extent of the love by which it is prompted."

The works most pleasing in the sight of God are *prayer, fasting, and almsdeeds*. They lead us most readily to perfection, because they subdue our threefold concupiscence: that of pride, of lust of the flesh and of lust of the eyes. Prayer subdues pride, fasting the lust of the flesh, and almsgiving the lust of the eyes or the inordinate desire for the possession of earthly goods. By prayer, fasting, and alms-giving we are drawn away from this earth and on toward God.

Even our most insignificant actions are rendered pleasing to God by being done for the glory of God. St. Paul writes: "Therefore whether you eat or drink, or whatever else you do, do all to the glory of God." (1 *Cor.* x. 21.) This applies to our work, recreation, etc. Therefore we ought often renew our good intention, saying: "All for the glory of God." St. Bernard remarks: "What the body is without life, that is our work without a good intention."

Without good works no man having the use

of reason can be saved. For Christ says: "Every tree, therefore, that does not yield good fruit shall be cut down and cast into the fire." (*Matt.* iii. 10.) At the Last Judgment the Judge will require good works of us. That so-called "righteousness," consisting in "not stealing, not swindling, not murdering," will not avail us then and there. St. Chrysostom writes: "Many shall be damned, not because of their evil deeds, but because of their neglect in performing good ones."

By the performance of good works the sinner receives many actual graces necessary for his conversion; the just man thereby receives increase of sanctifying grace and remission of the temporal punishment still his due. We merit, moreover, the hearing of our prayers, and often also temporal reward. But all these supernatural graces are lost by the commission of mortal sin.

We may cede the merits of our good works also to others, to the living and to the souls in purgatory. By doing so the good work, as one of atonement or suffrage, benefits them; and as one of merit, benefits us. Its atoning value is not lost to us, because it is a work of mercy, for which both remission of the punishment of sin and eternal reward is promised. Thus the good work performed for others merits a twofold reward.

For the sake of giving a good example we should not hide our good works, for Christ says: "So let your light shine before men that they may

see your good works, and glorify your Father, who is in heaven." (*Matt.* v. 16.)

We should devote both our means and our time to the performance of good works. "And I say to you: Make unto you friends from the mammon of iniquity: that when you shall fail, they may receive you into everlasting dwellings." (*Luke* xvi. 9.) And: "The night cometh when no man can work." (*John* ix. 4.)

OBJECTIONS

1. *According to St. Paul, man's justification comes by faith, not by works.*

St. Paul does not say by faith "alone"; the interpolation of this word is a falsification of the text. Moreover, the Apostle's words in that passage do not refer to the good works of Christianity, but to the ceremonial works enjoined by the Mosaic law.

That *faith alone* is not sufficient for salvation is explicitly taught by Christ Himself, who says: "Not every one that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." (*Matt.* vii. 21.) And: "Unless you do penance, you shall all likewise perish." (*Luke* xiii. 3.) Faith must be joined with good works, with the practice of Christian virtue. "So faith also, if it have not works, is dead in itself." (*James* ii. 17.) "Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified." (*Rom.* ii. 13.) "Do you see that by works a man is justi-

fied, and not by faith only?" (*James* ii. 24.) The Church always taught, and teaches to-day, that there is a difference between living and dead faith. Living faith is that which operates in charity; it causes justification. Dead faith, which is not manifested by works, and merely believes in the truth of doctrine, does not cause justification.

2. *If the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity come by infusion, nobody can give them to himself; therefore one not possessing them is not culpable.*

It is our duty to learn to know and to use the means whereby we receive these virtues. Whoever neglects to do so is culpable.

3. *We are commanded to love God "with our whole heart, our whole soul, and our whole mind." Who can say of himself that he does so?*

We must not misconstrue the import of this commandment. These words imply that we must love God above all things, to the exclusion of everything outside of Himself. By uniting our will with the will of God, so that we are resolved never to offend Him by mortal sin, we truly love Him with our whole heart, our whole soul, our whole mind. True, there are degrees of loving God "above all things"; we may strive to arrive at a higher degree of love toward Him by avoiding venial sin. But even by the lowest degree of loving Him, the purpose of avoiding mortal sin, we are raised to a high station. This consideration

should console us and fill us with confidence; it ought to incite us to greater fervor and zeal in the love and service of God, and draw us more closely toward Him. Even in this respect God regards our will: if we will what is in our power to please Him, we really love Him "above all things."

4. *Many who pose as models of virtue and "righteousness by works" are worse than others.*

It can not be denied that among those who affect virtue there are some hypocrites. But the Church severely condemns hypocrisy and deceit. Moreover, it is unjust and uncharitable to accuse every one who strives to lead a virtuous life of hypocrisy because some people are hypocrites.

5. *Virtue robs life of every pleasure and causes sadness.*

True, many of the so-called pleasures of life are denied to the person striving after virtue. He must curb sensuality, bear contempt and ridicule, ingratitude and misrepresentation. But knowing that he is thereby advanced and perfected in virtue, he experiences a tranquillity of conscience and a peace of soul that prevents all sadness. As to sharing in the pleasures of life, he is permitted to do so when they do not expose him to the danger of sin, and are enjoyed within the proper limits.

Examples**PROFITLESS FOR ETERNITY**

One of the most valorous and brave defenders of Poland, his country, relates: "Educated in the most famous universities of Germany, I preserved the Faith in my heart, but my life was not in conformity with its teachings. I was consumed with an ardent love of my country, and in the high station which I had attained I had frequent opportunity to promote its welfare. At a rather late period of my life I had a dream. I found myself in a strange place, which was very beautiful, where I saw a number of persons engaged in writing. Approaching one of them, I asked him who they were and what they were doing. He replied: 'We are angels of God, appointed to write the good actions of men on the pages of the Book of Life.' I asked to be permitted to look at the page bearing my name. The angel pointed it out to me, and to my great consternation I saw that it was empty, save for a few remarks. 'Is it possible,' I cried, 'that I have scarcely done anything meritorious for eternity? I, who did so much for the welfare of my country?' And the angel said: 'My friend, in the Book of Life are written only the deeds done for God and for love of Him.'

"I woke from my dream. For me it was the call of grace and the beginning of my conversion. 'For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole

world and suffer the loss of his soul?' " (*Mark* viii. 16.)

A PARABLE

A man had three friends. Two of them he loved, toward the third he was indifferent, though he was the one most devoted to his interests. One day the man was accused of a crime and cited to appear at court. He said to his friends: "Which one of you will accompany me and defend me?" The first excused himself with other engagements. The second accompanied him as far as the court room, but let him enter alone. The third, in whom he had trusted least, went in with him to the judge, and defended him so eloquently and successfully that his innocence was established and he was honorably dismissed.

Man has three friends in this world. Money, which he esteems his best friend, leaves him first. His relations and friends accompany him to the grave, and there leave him. His third friend, the one whom he neglected most in life, are his good works. They alone accompany him to the throne of his Judge and plead in his favor.



OUR LADY OF THE MOST HOLY ROSARY

*Blessed Saint Dominic, who didst institute the devotion
of the holy Rosary, and Saint Rose of Lima, pray for us.*

PART IV

Grace, and the Means of Grace

CHAPTER I

Sanctifying Grace

SANCTIFYING grace is, according to St. Paul, "the charity of God poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Ghost." (*Rom.* v. 5.) "That, being justified by His grace, we may be heirs, according to hope, of life everlasting." (*Titus* iii. 7.) "By it," says the Council of Trent, "we are renewed in the spirit of our mind, and . . . actually are just when we receive justice in ourselves, . . . which the Holy Ghost imparts to each as He pleases, and according to the disposition of each, and his co-operation." (*Sess.* vi. ch. 7.) In other words, sanctifying grace is a supernatural gift which the soul receives from God, whereby it is made just and holy. From being an enemy of God, man thereby becomes His friend, His child, an heir to heaven, entitled to the eternal possession of God, who gives Himself and all His glory and bliss in eternal reward to His children.

To understand this better let us imagine a man who is in the state of mortal sin, and therefore deprived of sanctifying grace. Let us investigate what this grace operates in him when he

receives it in the Sacrament of Baptism or Penance.

1. *Sanctifying grace blots out mortal sin, both original and actual.* The state of sin consists in the privation of sanctifying grace which ought to adorn the soul. When, therefore, sanctifying grace is obtained, sin is destroyed. The supernatural love of God is instilled into the soul; it is rendered pleasing in the sight of God, and from being His enemy, becomes His child.

2. *Sanctifying grace brings with it the infused theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity.* They are called "infused virtues" because man, of his own nature, is not endowed with them; they are infused into his soul by the Holy Ghost.

Faith provides the soul of man, so to say, with new sight. It enables him to see, in a manner, with God's own eye, and to acknowledge Him as the Supreme Being, the Infallible Intelligence, as his Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. True, "We see now through a glass in a dark manner; but then face to face." (1 Cor. xiii. 12.) When compared with man's natural power of cognition, faith and the truths it teaches appear in an ineffably clear light. How miserable, then, and how cruel to their own soul are they who have renounced and abandoned the Faith! Because of an unreasonable doubt or of silly pride they extinguished that divine light without which they can not find the way of salvation.

Whilst faith enlightens us with a supernatural

knowledge of things divine, hope inspires us with supernatural confidence of finally possessing God Himself and of attaining, through Him, eternal bliss and the means to render ourselves capable and worthy of it.

Incomparably greater and more sublime than either faith and hope is the infused virtue of charity, or love of God. By it these virtues receive their consummation and perfection. There is, however, besides the supernatural virtue of the love of God, another, a *natural* love of Him. By nature we can and ought to love God as our Creator and Lord, whose image we are. But this natural love is as far removed from infused love as the creature's nature is below that of the Creator. By natural love God is loved like a master is loved by his servant; by supernatural love God is loved as a father is loved by his child: by the infused virtue of charity we love and embrace God as our Father.

3. *Sanctifying grace renders the soul pleasing to God.* By it all the mortal sins of which we have been guilty are effaced, and as a ray of light dispels the gloom of darkness, so does sanctifying grace remove mists and darkness from the soul. As iron, when heated in the fire, loses its dark appearance and becomes bright and shining like the fire itself, and at the same time soft and pliable, so that it may be shaped into any form desired, thus a soul in the state of sin is ugly and hateful in the sight of God; but when He com-

municates Himself to it by sanctifying grace, all its stains are washed away, it becomes holy and just before Him, and being warmed with His holy love, it becomes pliable to His blessed will and obedient to His commandments. This explains what St. Paul means when he says: "As many of you as have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ" (*Gal.* iii. 27), because by the grace of justification received in Baptism, the justice and sanctity of Christ is poured forth into our souls, which makes us resemble Him, as the iron heated in the fire resembles the fire itself. A soul in the state of sin is a dead soul, and displeasing in the sight of God. It is incapable of performing any action conducive to its eternal salvation, and of itself tends only to run further and further into the corruption of sin. But when sanctifying grace is infused into such a soul, it becomes beautiful in the sight of God, and can perform with ease any act meritorious of eternal life.

4. *Sanctifying grace imparts to our soul a number of moral virtues.* Such virtues are humility, meekness, charity, temperance, etc. True, we find natural virtues called by the same names, which became known to man by the light of reason, but they are as different from the supernatural virtues mentioned as earth is different from heaven. Natural virtue has earthly motives, supernatural virtue heavenly ones. Sanctifying grace elevates and transforms our nature and invests our virtue with such excel-

lence that our least and most indifferent act is rendered more noble and of greater value than the most noble and glorious deed done without it.

5. *Sanctifying grace makes us the adopted children of God, co-heirs of Jesus Christ, and temples of the Holy Ghost.* By sanctifying grace we become the adopted children of God. Sin brought death on our soul by separating us from Him, and as long as we remain in sin we are under the tyrannical sway of satan. But sanctifying grace bursts the bonds, and God adopts us as His own. From that moment we can address Him in truth as "Our Father, who art in heaven." What goodness on the part of God! This it is which made St. John say: "Behold, what manner of charity the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called and should be the sons of God." (1 John iii. 1.)

Sanctifying grace renders us the brethren and co-heirs of Jesus Christ. We are united with Our Saviour in the closest manner; we become one with Him; we have the same Father as He; all His treasures are ours, and we have a right and title to the inheritance of heaven, as members and co-heirs of Him who became "the first-born amongst many brethren." (*Rom. viii. 29.*)

By sanctifying grace we become temples of the Holy Ghost, who dwells in a particular manner in the souls of the just. "Know you not that you are temples of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1 Cor. iii. 16.) He confers

upon us His seven gifts, wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord, which gifts correspond to the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity, and to the cardinal virtues of fortitude, prudence, justice, and temperance. If we exercise ourselves in the supernatural virtues and gifts of the Holy Ghost, we shall produce in our souls that admirable harvest called in Holy Scripture the twelve fruits of the Holy Ghost. "But the fruit of the Spirit is charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity, mildness, faith, modesty, continency, chastity." (*Gal. v. 22.*) All these are instilled into our soul by sanctifying grace.

6. *Sanctifying grace gives dignity, value, and merit to all our good works.* For when a soul is united with God by His grace, the good works which that soul performs from a pure intention of pleasing Him are no longer the works of corrupted, sinful man, but fruits produced from the branch united with the vine, which is Jesus Christ, and dignified by His merits communicated to them by grace. "The sublimity of grace," says St. Augustine, "ascends not only beyond the stars, and even the heavens, but rises above the celestial spirits." Sanctifying grace endows our good works with the power of canceling beforehand the temporal punishment which is due to venial sin, or which remains after the remission of mortal sin. Every good work performed in the state of grace shares in the infinite atoning merit of

Jesus Christ, by which divine justice was paid to the last farthing. What an immense treasure, then, is sanctifying grace! The least of our good works are invested by it with the power of canceling, even in this life, the future punishments of purgatory. It gives our good works an eternal, heavenly value.

7. Sanctifying grace makes us participate in the merits and atonement of Christ and the saints.

By this grace the just become one mystical body whose head is Christ. Among the members of this body there is a communion of spiritual goods: what Christ merited belongs to all the members, for He merited it for them, not for Himself; and what the community of members merit is shared by each individual member in proportion to the measure of grace each one has received. Therefore, if we are in the state of grace, the saints can obtain for us from God, by their merits and intercession, many and great actual graces, by which we are preserved from sin and impelled to continue increasing our measure of grace. In countless instances, when our petitions and good works fail to prevail with God, the saints come to our aid and obtain for us what we alone can not obtain.

8. Sanctifying grace places us under the special protection of divine providence. Having become children of God through the effects of sanctifying grace, He provides for us with paternal love. True, we are not exempt from trials in this

world, but "to them that love God all things work together unto good." (*Rom.* viii. 28.) Tribulations preserve us from sin, promote virtue, and increase our merit; by them we can cancel the punishments of purgatory and increase our glory in heaven.

9. *Sanctifying grace makes us the object of the special protection of the angels.* By sanctifying grace we are raised to such a sublime dignity that the angels, seeing us favored children of God, are happy to serve us, because thereby they serve God Himself. They regard the just soul as the temple of the Holy Ghost, the abode of divinity, and where God abides, there appear the heavenly hosts.

10. *Sanctifying grace clothes the soul with heavenly beauty.* God is Beauty Infinite, and the soul in the state of grace is God's image. For such a soul bears God Himself within itself, and reflects His beauty, like a shining surface reflects the rays of the sun. To comprehend the beauty of a soul in the state of grace we must have first beheld the infinite beauty of God.

11. *Sanctifying grace makes us sharers in the sanctity of God:* "Partakers of the divine nature." (*2 Peter* i. 4.) Hence the name of this grace: it *sanctifies* us. To become holy is our first duty, the one which comprises all the rest. To be holy is to hate and avoid sin, and to love and practise virtue. This is achieved by sanctifying grace.

12. *Sanctifying grace makes us capable of en-*

joying the beatific vision of God and eternal bliss in heaven. The essence of heavenly bliss consists in the beatific vision of God. Joined with this essential happiness are other glories and joys, of which "it is written: That eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love Him." (1 Cor. ii. 9.)

All this sanctifying grace operates in the soul. It is a gift beyond all other gifts, surpassing everything here below. What a great value, then, ought we to place upon it, how diligent should we be to preserve and increase it, and how careful not to lose it! We should be ready to sacrifice everything, even life itself, if necessary to preserve it, for to die deprived of sanctifying grace is the greatest of all misfortunes, because it implies eternal damnation.

OBJECTIONS

1. *We may perform good works even though we are not in the state of grace.*

The Church teaches that we do nothing pleasing to God, nothing meritorious of heaven without the aid of divine grace. "Without me you can do nothing." (John xv. 5.) And in the parable of the laborers in the vineyard (Matt. xx. 1-17.) Our Lord promises them reward for their labor. Therefore we must work for God *in accordance with His will*. To work in this manner we need the grace of God. Though our reason

may not comprehend it, faith tells us that grace is necessary for the performance of good works to render them meritorious. Alms-giving by unbelievers, for instance, is a good work, but they do not thereby merit supernatural reward, because they did not do it from a supernatural motive, for the love of God, for God's sake. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." (*Heb. xi. 6.*) Works performed by one not in the state of sanctifying grace can not please God, because the state in which he that performs them is, does not please Him; and if they are not pleasing to God, they are not meritorious, and therefore not good works in the proper sense.

2. *The Church teaches that God gives to all men sufficient grace to work out their salvation: therefore all shall be saved.*

God does not use compulsion, does not suppress man's liberty, but leaves him free to accept His grace and follow its impulse, or to reject it and to refuse complying with it. Hence man's salvation is neither exclusively God's nor exclusively man's work: it is wrought by the co-operation of both God and man, when divine grace and human liberty combine to accomplish it. Yet as grace always precedes and begins and perfects in us the work of salvation, it occupies the first place in the divine plan of redemption.

3. *How can good works be meritorious when their performance is dependent on God's grace?*

That good work is called meritorious, which, in

justice, deserves a reward. If God promised a reward for a certain act, we merit it by reason of this promise. This is called merit in the proper sense. Different from it is the merit to which this term applies in a figurative sense only. Such merit can not claim the reward in justice, but receives it through God's goodness and bounty. The doctrine of the Church on this subject is stated as follows by the Council of Trent: "Who-soever maintains that good works are gifts of God in the sense that they are not also merits of the just man himself; or that the just man, by the good works performed by him through the grace of God and the merits of Jesus Christ, whose living member he is, does not really merit increase of grace, and if he dies in the state of grace, eternal life together with increase of glory: let him be anathema."

4. *If the good works performed by the sinner are not meritorious, he is not obliged to perform any.*

Good works resulting from a supernatural motive, even when performed by one not in the state of grace, are not useless, much less sinful, but prepare for justification. They are merit in a figurative sense, and if God rewards them, He does so because of His infinite clemency.

5. *The doctrine that we lose by mortal sin, together with sanctifying grace, also all merits hitherto acquired, seems too rigorous.*

When the just man loses the grace of justifica-

tion he is deprived also of all merits previously acquired, because he places himself in a condition which makes it impossible for him to claim them any longer. But his merits revive when sanctifying grace is restored to him, because the works performed in the state of grace remain his.

Examples

GOD OFFERS GRACE TO ALL MEN

A company of friends, traveling during a hot summer, one day, being fatigued with their long journey, rested in the shade of a tree and composed themselves to sleep. After a time some of them were awakened by the piercing rays of the sun, rose, and pursuing their way, arrived safe at their destination. The rest slept on, and when they awoke darkness had set in. They, too, rose and hastened to reach the end of their journey. Unhappily, however, they were in a dense forest and in danger of being attacked by wolves and killed.

The lesson intended to be conveyed by this parable is: We are wanderers on earth, and were overtaken by the slumber of sin. God, the Sun of Justice, sent us the rays of His inspiration and grace, but only a few gave heed to His call. These latter have reason to rejoice, but not to boast, for they owe their safety to God. They who continue in their sins have no one to blame but themselves if they perish, for they resisted the inspirations of grace.

THE BOOK OF LIFE

A saintly hermit in his pious meditations often prayed to God: "O Lord, grant me but one glance at the Book of Life, that I may know whether my name is among those of the elect." One day this his prayer was answered by a voice from heaven saying: "And if thou knewest, what wouldst thou do?" He replied: "I should live for God and His service alone." And the voice answered: "Do thus and thy name is there."

CHAPTER II

The Means of Grace: The Holy Sacraments in General

SANCTIFYING grace is also called *habitual grace*, because after having cleansed our soul from sin, it resides in us in a fixed, permanent and habitual manner, as long as we do not forfeit it by committing a mortal sin.

In addition to sanctifying or habitual grace, which we receive in Baptism, and after losing it, regain in the Sacrament of Penance, God also gives us *actual grace*. Actual grace is a supernatural influence or impulse by which God enlightens our mind, excites our will, and moves our heart to perform some good work, overcome a temptation, repress an evil inclination or to repress some bad habit.

The necessity of actual grace is thus declared by the Council of Trent: "If any one say that divine grace is given through Jesus Christ, only to enable man to live justly and attain eternal life, as if by his own free will he could without grace do both these things, although scarcely and with difficulty: let him be anathema." (*Sess. vi. can. 2.*) "If any one say that without the previous inspiration and aid of the Holy Spirit man can believe, hope, love, and repent *as he ought*: let him be anathema." (*Sess. vi. can. 2.*) The

phrase "as he ought" is important; it means "in a manner conducive to that end."

There may occur in a man's life *seven* occasions when a special assistance of divine grace is necessary to him. Therefore Our Lord Jesus Christ instituted *seven sacraments*, by means of which He confers on us, besides sanctifying grace in general, those special actual graces of which a man stands in need in order to shun evil and to do good in that particular condition in life.

The sacraments *really* and *truly* confer *grace*. Man receives through them not only a blessing for the promotion of his spiritual welfare, but is really endowed with a claim to heaven and the means to attain it. The well-prepared Christian who receives a sacrament is certain that the grace of God is *conferred* upon him.

But he must be *capable* of receiving this grace. He must *first* have the will to receive the sacrament, or at least must not protest against its reception. For instance, if a Jew were baptized against his will, he would not receive the sacrament. But when a child not yet having a will of its own is baptized, Baptism is valid, because the child is not opposed to its reception. *Secondly*, to receive grace by a sacrament, its subject must be duly prepared; that is, he who is about to receive it must have the faith, and if he is guilty of sin, must have true contrition and a firm purpose of amendment. Provided these conditions

be fulfilled, he can be sure that the grace of God will be conferred upon him by the sacrament.

A sacrament is an outward sign, which, through its institution by Christ, effects the interior grace which it signifies. But why did Christ, who is independent of external matter when He confers grace, bind its operation to external acts; for instance, in Baptism, to water, in a manner that makes it indispensable, under ordinary circumstances, to the conveyance of grace? By the outward, perceptible sign employed in the administration of the sacraments Christ manifests His infinite wisdom.

First, the outward signs, actions, and words employed in the administration of the sacraments serve not only to *confer* interior grace, but also to represent it and to make it apparent. For instance, the Catholic seeing and receiving the species of bread in the Blessed Eucharist is reminded by its very appearance that Christ, by His omnipotence, nourishes his soul as well as his body. The sacraments, therefore, by their outward signs, render us more receptive of the eternal truths, for what we see we more easily understand.

Secondly, the outward sign gives us the certainty that when it is employed we receive at the same time interior grace. Were there no perceptible act, we could never know for certain whether or not we had really received God's grace. Assurance thereof would have to come by

some other, extraordinary means; now it comes in the ordinary manner, by the outward signs employed in the administration of the sacraments.

Again, by the sacraments the whole man, body and soul, is to be sanctified and confirmed in justice. The body being visible, its sanctification is also accomplished visibly. As nature in paradise co-operated in the sin of our first parents, thus it ought also help to restore him to justice and sanctity. Eve was seduced not only by the serpent's words, but also by the attractive appearance of the forbidden fruit; and man continues to be led to transgress the divine law by the visible charms of nature. By the outward signs employed in the administration of the sacraments nature, so to say, repairs the damage it caused to man's soul.

In the course of time the Church added the various ceremonies which are employed in the administration of the sacraments. True, the sacraments are valid without these ceremonies, which, in case of necessity, may be omitted; but they are very useful and instructive. For they prepare for the reception of the sacraments by producing the proper disposition in the mind of the recipient, thus increasing his fervor and rendering him more worthy of the graces they confer. Again, they symbolize, by additional outward signs, the sacramental grace, call our attention to it, remind us of it, and move us to good resolutions. For instance, witnessing a Baptism,

we are forcibly reminded by the white garment handed to the child of the innocence which Baptism produces in the soul, and are at the same time admonished to conserve it. Hence the Council of Trent declares: "If any one says that the established and approved ceremonies of the Church which are used in the solemn administration of the sacraments may be despised or omitted at will, without sin, by the ministers of the sacrament; or that they may be changed into others by any bishop: let him be anathema."

OBJECTIONS

1. *How can a material substance or a visible act produce sanctifying grace?*

Manifestly not of or through itself, but by the ordinance of God. It is He that infuses grace at the moment when the substance or act is brought into relation with man in the manner prescribed. The Council of Trent declares that God is the efficient cause of our justice, the sacraments are the instrumental cause, and sanctifying grace the formal cause.

2. *How can a minister of the sacraments who is in the state of sin, and who, by his very act, commits a sin, effect grace and sanctity?*

The Church teaches, as the Council of Trent declares, that the sacraments do not obtain their efficacy from the minister, but from Jesus Christ who instituted them and annexed His grace to them. Just as a wealthy man may employ a poor

servant to give alms, thus Christ may employ a sinful minister to confer grace.

3. *The ceremonies used in the administration of the sacraments are unnecessary and distract attention.*

The ceremonies symbolize the great and many graces conferred by the sacraments. They stimulate devotion and invite our reverence. Hence the declaration of the Council of Trent quoted above.

Example

SEVEN SACRAMENTS

In the third century the Church condemned the Novatians for refusing the Sacrament of Confirmation to those who were newly baptized; in the fourth, the Manicheans, who rejected Matrimony as a sacrament; in the fourteenth, Wickliff and his followers, who repudiated Extreme Unction; in the sixteenth, Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli, who abolished other sacraments. Hence the Council of Trent declared: "If any one says that the sacraments of the New Law were not all instituted by Christ, or that there are more or less than *seven*: Baptism, Confirmation, the Most Holy Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony: let him be anathema."

CHAPTER III

The Sacrament of Baptism

AMONG all the means of salvation ordained by Christ, the Sacrament of Baptism is the *first and most essential*, for Christ Our Lord Himself declares: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he can not enter into the kingdom of God." (*John* iii. 5.) At our birth we bear the stain of original sin, and are therefore sinful children of Adam, but not children of God. We are born to a short life here on earth, but not to eternal life in heaven. In Baptism, by the infusion of the water of regeneration, we are born again by the grace of God. Sin and its punishment is taken away from us; God's grace is bestowed upon us; we are rendered pleasing in His sight, and we are changed from sinful children of Adam into justified children of God, into heirs of heaven.

Baptism is a sacrament, for it has all the requisites. There is the outward sign, in the water and the words; there is the interior grace, in the cleansing from sin; there is the institution by Christ, who said: "Going, therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them." (*Matt.* xxviii. 19.)

Baptism is a sacrament, and the first and most necessary of sacraments, because without having

received it we are incapable of receiving any other sacrament.

Baptism is a sacrament which cleanses us from original sin and makes us Christians. If the person baptized be guilty of actual sins, they are also remitted by Baptism, together with the punishment due to them. That Baptism cleanses us not only from original sin, but also remits all the actual sins committed before receiving it can be proved from the testimony of Scripture. St. Paul writes: "We ourselves also were some time unwise, incredulous, erring, slaves to divers desires and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the goodness and kindness of God Our Saviour appeared: not by the works of justice, which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the laver of regeneration and renovation of the Holy Ghost, whom He hath poured forth upon us abundantly through Christ Our Saviour; that, being justified by His grace, we may be heirs, according to hope, of life everlasting." (*Titus* iii. 3-7.) In this passage the Apostle acknowledges his former sins, then declares that the kindness he received from God in delivering him from them was not owing to his own merits, but to the mercy of God; that the means by which they were remitted was the "laver of regeneration"—the Sacrament of Baptism. At St. Peter's first sermon, when the Jews asked him what they must do, he replied: "Do penance, and be baptized,

every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins." (*Acts* ii. 38.) When Ananias came to St. Paul after his conversion, the Apostle said to him: "Rise up, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins." (*Acts* xxii. 16.) These texts prove that all the actual sins committed before Baptism are remitted by means of this sacrament when it is received with the necessary dispositions.

That an adult, or one who has arrived at the age of reason, should receive pardon for his sins by Baptism, it is necessary that he should receive it with faith, hope, and a true sorrow for sin. If these dispositions be wanting, he receives, it is true, the character of a Christian, but the other effects of the sacrament, as the infusion of sanctifying grace, the remission of original sin and of all actual sins, are suspended, and will remain so until the obstacle making void these effects be removed by true repentance.

Not only are the actual sins committed before Baptism remitted by that sacrament, but also all the punishment due to them, whether in this world or the world to come. And the reason is, that as Baptism is the door by which we enter the fold of Christ, the merits of His death are, by that sacrament, applied to our souls in so superabundant a manner as fully to satisfy the justice of God for all demands against us. This is the reason why, when grown-up persons are baptized, no penitential works are imposed upon them.

Baptism frees us from sin, but not from the infirmities and evil propensities of our nature. Ignorance, concupiscence, the infirmities of body and soul are the *effects* of original sin more than a punishment inflicted for it; and God is pleased not to take them away by the grace of Baptism, but leaves human nature subject to them. He does it to humble our pride; to detach our hearts from this world and to make us regard it as a place of punishment; to make us desire for heaven, where alone we shall be delivered from all our miseries; to make us work out our salvation in fear and trembling; for our infirmities serve much to exercise us in virtue.

Baptism is necessary to salvation, for Christ Our Lord says: "Amen, amen I say to thee: unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he can not enter into the kingdom of God." (*John* iii. 5.) Again, when Our Saviour gave His apostles the commission to teach and baptize all nations, He added: "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned." (*Mark* xvi. 16.) He therefore requires that all should believe the truths taught by the apostles, and should also be *baptized*. Salvation is promised, by these words, not to faith alone, but to faith and Baptism together, which evidently proves the necessity of one as well as the other.

Baptism is so indispensably necessary to salvation that in danger of death *any person* can

validly baptize, and can do so in any place whatsoever, and without any ceremonies. Baptism conferred by non-Catholics and unbelievers is valid if the person baptizing does so in the right manner and with the intention of doing what the Church does. A person baptizing one in danger of death must pour water on the head, if possible, or else on some other part of the body of the one he is about to baptize, and whilst pouring the water he must say: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." If a child thus baptized in danger of death survives, the ceremonies should be supplied in church by the priest, who must be informed that the child was baptized.

Baptism is so indispensably necessary to salvation that the Church teaches: If actual Baptism by water is impossible; that is, if a person who has embraced the true Faith can not get himself baptized, although he earnestly desires it, his desire takes the place, and has the effects, of Baptism. This is called Baptism of Desire. Again, if a person suffers martyrdom for the Faith before he has been able to receive Baptism, martyrdom supplies the want of actual Baptism. This is called Baptism of Blood.

Since Baptism is so necessary for salvation, Our Lord in instituting it has given to men every facility for receiving it. He appointed the bishops and priests of His Church as the *ordinary* ministers of this sacrament, and to them

alone belongs the right of administering it *solemnly*; that is, with the ceremonies that accompany it.

Baptism is administered by pouring water on the head of the person to be baptized. By "water" is meant natural, not artificial, water; that is to say, spring, well, river, pond, sea or rain water. That a person may be really baptized, and Baptism be validly administered, it is absolutely necessary that the words constituting the form of Baptism should be accurately pronounced whilst the water is being poured on the head of the person to be baptized. If even a single word is omitted, no Baptism is given. The words to be said whilst pouring the water are: "*I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*" And they must be said with the intention of baptizing. If a child is to be baptized, and there is some doubt as to its being alive, Baptism is given conditionally; that is, the formula of Baptism is preceded by the words, "If thou art alive." If an adult is baptized, of the validity of whose former Baptism there is any doubt, Baptism is administered under the condition, "If thou art not baptized."

To render more impressive this sacred rite, upon which depends our eternal salvation, the Church administers it in connection with certain ceremonies. These ceremonies are so many lessons, informing us of the effects of grace obtained by Baptism and of the obligations which

we contract by its reception. Therefore we proceed to explain their nature and meaning.

1. The water which is used in Baptism is solemnly blessed on the eves of Easter and Pentecost. The reason is to remind us that the virtue and effects of Baptism proceed from the merits of Christ, and not from any natural virtue inherent in the water.

2. The child to be baptized is brought to the door or vestibule of the church to signify that as yet it does not belong to the number of the faithful. There the priest, vested in surplice and purple stole, asks the sponsors the child's name. This name, the Council of Trent exhorts, should be that of a saint, to remind the person bearing it to imitate his patron's virtues and thereby to obtain his protection and intercession. Then the priest, addressing the sponsor in the child's name, asks: "What dost thou ask of the Church of God?" The sponsor replies: "Faith." And again the priest asks: "What does faith bring to thee?" Answer: "Life everlasting." Now the priest says: "If thou wilt enter life everlasting, observe the commandments: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and thy neighbor as thyself," thus reminding the child that after attaining reason, Baptism alone is not sufficient to enter eternal life, but must be joined with faith and charity.

3. The wretched state to which sin has reduced

the human race is intimated by the priest's breathing three times on the person to be baptized, saying: "Go forth from him, unclean spirit, and give place to the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete." The unclean spirit, the devil, has a special power over every man in the state of original sin. By Baptism the Holy Ghost will take possession of the soul and body of the Christian; therefore the unclean spirit is commanded to leave him.

4. And having put to flight the devil, the priest imprints on the child's forehead and breast the sign of the cross, saying: "Receive the sign of the cross upon thy forehead and upon thy breast, assume the faith of the heavenly precepts, and let thy deportment be such that thou mayest be a temple of God." Thus the child receives the first impression of the cross. He receives it on the forehead, to signify that a Christian must never be ashamed to make open profession of the faith of his crucified Saviour; and on the breast, to signify that the love of Jesus Christ and a readiness to obey all His divine commandments and to share in His sufferings might continually abide in his breast.

5. Now the priest lays his hand on the child's head, saying: "Almighty and eternal God, Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, deign to look upon this Thy servant N——, whom Thou wast pleased to call to the rudiments of faith; expel from him all blindness of the heart; break all the snares of satan with which he was bound; open to him the

gate of Thy mercy, that, imbued with the sign of Thy wisdom, he may escape all stench of concupiscence and serve Thee joyfully in the sweet odor of Thy precepts, and progress from day to day. Through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen."

6. The priest then blesses the salt, to purify it from the malignant influence of the evil spirit, and puts a few grains of the salt thus blessed into the child's mouth, saying: "N——, receive the salt of wisdom; let it be a propitiation unto thee for eternal life. Amen." Salt is a symbol of wisdom; it is also a preservative against corruption. This ceremony, then, signifies that the person baptized must make known to the world the sweet savor of the law of God by the good example of a virtuous life and holy conversation, and show by all his works that it is the doctrine of Christ that preserves the soul from corruption and establishes a firm hope of the resurrection of the body.

7. After this the priest again peremptorily commands the wicked spirit to depart and never attempt to deprive him of this precious gift. Then making the sign of the cross on the child's forehead, he says: "And this sign of the holy cross which we place upon his forehead do thou, accursed devil, never dare to violate."

8. After these ceremonies the priest introduces the child into the church, laying the end of the stole upon him, and saying: "N——, enter the temple of God, that thou mayest have part with

Christ in eternal life." Then the priest, jointly with the sponsors, recites aloud the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed. And again exorcising the unclean spirit, he commands him to depart, in the name and by the power of the Almighty Father, His Son Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost.

9. Following the example of Christ, who healed a deaf and dumb man by touching his tongue and his ears with spittle, saying: "*Eppheta*—Be opened," the priest, taking spittle from his mouth, repeats the same words whilst touching with it the ears and nostrils of the child, thereby signifying the necessity of having the senses of the soul open to the truth and grace of God.

10. Now follows the solemn renunciation of satan and all his works and pomps, after which the priest anoints the child on the breast and between the shoulders, making the sign of the cross. This outward unction represents the inward anointing of the soul by divine grace. The anointing of the breast signifies the necessity of fortifying the heart with heavenly courage, that we may act manfully and do our duty in all things. The anointing between the shoulders signifies the necessity of the like grace in order to bear and support all the adversities and trials of this mortal life.

11. The priest now changes the violet stole hitherto worn by him to a white one, to denote

that sorrow is to be changed into joy. Then follows the profession of faith, after which the Sacrament of Baptism is administered as follows: While the sponsors hold or touch the child, the priest pours the baptismal water on the child's head three times, in the form of a cross, saying meanwhile: "N——, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." He says these words in such a manner that the three pourings of the water concur with the pronouncing of the words, "I baptize thee," and the names of the three divine persons.

12. Then the priest anoints the baptized child on the crown of the head in form of a cross with holy chrism, compounded of oil and balsam blessed by the bishop, to signify, first, that the person baptized is solemnly consecrated to God, and secondly, that he has a share with Christ, the Anointed of God, in His unction and grace.

13. After this anointing, the priest puts upon the head of the baptized a white linen cloth, now used instead of the white garment with which the new Christians were clothed after Baptism in ancient times. This is to signify the purity and innocence which we receive in Baptism, and which we must take care to preserve till death.

14. Finally the priest puts a lighted candle into the hand of the child's sponsor, to remind us of the words of Our Lord: "So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father, who is in heaven."

(*Matt. v. 16.*) Having become a child of light, the baptized person must walk as such by charity and good works, for the glory of God and the edification of men.

These, then, are the beautiful and instructive ceremonies of Baptism. They remind us that by nature we are children of wrath, slaves of satan, and, as such, excluded from heaven, and that by Baptism God's infinite mercy takes away sin from us and makes us His children, heirs of heaven.

The wonderful effects of Baptism ought also remind us of the great importance of having the utmost care to have children baptized as soon as possible after their birth. They sin grievously who, from whatsoever cause, permit a child to die without Baptism. Therefore parents—above all, mothers—must be watchful that nothing occur to prevent their children from receiving this sacrament.

OBJECTIONS

1. *According to the doctrine of the Catholic Church, any person can baptize validly in case of necessity: how can an infidel or non-Christian confer grace?*

Grace is conferred not by man, but by God. It originates not with the minister of the sacrament, but with God, who instituted it, and appointed the sacrament as its agency. The Fourth Council of the Lateran declares: "The Sacrament of Baptism operates unto salvation when properly administered by whomsoever." This was the doc-

trine and practice of the Church from the beginning. She never repeated the Sacrament of Baptism once it had been administered in the proper manner.

2. Converts to the Catholic Church are, nevertheless, rebaptized.

Converts are baptized only when there is proof that their former Baptism was invalid on account of defect in its administration. If the validity of their Baptism is doubtful, which, in our day, is almost always the case, they receive conditional Baptism.

3. The rejection of non-Catholic sponsors is a proof of the intolerance of the Catholic Church.

The Church rejects not only non-Catholic sponsors, but also such as are notoriously bad Catholics, and she does so rightly. This course is demanded by the sanctity of the act at which sponsors assist, and also by the duties imposed upon them by it. Sponsors are responsible for the welfare, spiritual and temporal, of their godchildren. If the parents can not or will not provide for the Catholic education of their offspring, the sponsors must take their place. It is evident that they can do so only when they are themselves practical Catholics. Hence the attitude of the Church insisting on sponsors Catholic in name and in fact is not intolerance, but logic.

4. The Catholic Church assigns to eternal damnation children dying without Baptism.

The Catholic Church does *not* teach that chil-

dren dying without Baptism are damned, but that they are deprived of God's vision. St. Thomas Aquinas and many other theologians are of the opinion that such children are not only free from pain, but that their condition is such that, though deprived of eternal beatitude, they enjoy their existence and thank God for it.

Examples

ST. LOUIS, KING OF FRANCE

St. Louis, King of France, had a special love for the chapel of the chateau of Poissy, where he had been baptized. He often went there to kneel at the baptismal font and thank God for the grace bestowed upon him in Baptism. For the same reason he would often write his name as Louis of Poissy, without adding the title of king. When his friends asked him why he showed such preference for the plain chapel of Poissy, where he had only been baptized, whilst he seemed to have little regard for the grand cathedral at Rheims, where he had been crowned king, he replied: "Ought I not esteem more highly the place where I received the sublime dignity of a Christian than the one where I was made a temporal sovereign? At Rheims I succeeded to the earthly crown of my father; in Poissy I was crowned with the diadem of Christ, and was anointed with the oil of salvation as a child of God. By the coronation at Rheims I acceded to the throne of my father, which I have to leave at my death; at Poissy I

became, through Baptism, an heir of heaven, and received the right to ineffable, eternal glory.

BAPTISM ON THE STAGE

In the reign of Diocletian there was at Rome a comic actor named Genesius, who on one occasion undertook to ridicule the Christians by a parody of the sacraments on the stage. Accordingly, pretending illness, he called loudly for the priest, and when another actor in that character came on and asked wherefore he was called, Genesius replied: "Because I have a great desire for Baptism." Now it so happened that God by a miracle at that instant gave him the very desire he simulated, so that the Baptism which the supposed priest administered in jest was received by Genesius in reverent earnest. To make the mockery complete, the other players then dragged him before the emperor and with feigned gravity accused him of being a Christian. To the astonishment of all, Genesius declared that a Christian he was in real earnest. The emperor immediately ordered him to be tortured, but nothing could shake his constancy, for he died repeating: "There is but one God, whose Son Jesus Christ I adore and serve, and to Him I adhere though I suffer a thousand deaths." His, indeed, was a triple Baptism of desire, of water, and of blood. "And there are three that give testimony on earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three are one." (*John* i. 8.)

ST. FRANCIS OF SALES AND THE BAPTISMAL FONT

St. Francis of Sales as a boy would often lead his young companions to the parish church and arrange them round the font, where in infancy they had been baptized. "See," he would say, "this is the spot that should be dearer to us than any other, dearer even than our birthplace; for there we were born in sin, but here were made children of God." Then, after saying a prayer of thanksgiving, they would disperse and return to their games.

CHAPTER IV

The Sacrament of Confirmation

NOT content with rescuing us from eternal death by Baptism, Christ, in His ineffable love for us, instituted a sacrament for the special purpose of confirming us in the Faith. Baptism, indeed, makes us Christians, but still we are weak and imperfect Christians. To strengthen us, Christ instituted the Sacrament of Confirmation. Pope Melchiades writes: "In Baptism a man is enrolled in warfare; in Confirmation he is armed to fight. In Baptism we are regenerated to life; in Confirmation we are strengthened to fight; in Baptism we are washed, in Confirmation we are fortified."

These different gifts of the two sacraments shone forth clearly in the apostles; for although they were baptized, yet they were not endowed with that courage which rendered them fearless to confess His name and preach His doctrine. Therefore Our Lord, at His ascension, bade them: "Stay you in the city till you be endued with power from on high." (*Luke* xxiv. 49.)

The ordinary minister of the Sacrament of Confirmation is the bishop, as the successor of the apostles. A priest may validly administer this sacrament when empowered by the Pope to do so.

To give Confirmation the bishop proceeds to



OUR BLESSED LADY APPEARING TO
BERNADETTE SUBIROUX

"I am the Immaculate Conception," said Our Lady.

the altar and recites a number of prayers by which he implores the aid of God. Then he raises and extends his hands, and prays that the Holy Ghost descend upon those who are to be confirmed with His sevenfold gifts. This imposition of hands denotes the inward imparting of the Holy Ghost, or grace of God, to the soul, at the same time that the outward blessing is pronounced.

Then the bishop makes, with chrism, the sign of the cross on the forehead of each candidate for Confirmation. He does this by imposing his hand on his head and at the same time anointing him with the chrism, saying: "I sign thee with the sign of the cross; I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

The chrism is oil mixed with balsam and blessed only by the bishop. Oil was used by the ancients to render their limbs supple and active; it is therefore an emblem of that spirit and activity which a Christian ought to show forth in the profession of his Faith and in the performance of the duties of his religion. Oil, when burning, has also the property of giving light in darkness, and on that account signifies, when applied in Confirmation, that the Holy Ghost, in descending upon those who are to be confirmed, enlightens them amidst the darkness of the world and enflames their hearts with the fire of charity. The balsam mixed with the oil diffuses a pleasing

odor, and signifies, in Confirmation, that the Christian who is confirmed should diffuse everywhere the good odor of Jesus Christ by his virtues and good works.

The anointing is made on the forehead to indicate that we should never blush or fear to confess the name of Christ, even at the peril of life. The anointing is made in the form of a cross, to point out to us that we should never be ashamed of the cross of Christ, but should carry it with joy, after the example of Our Lord, and that we should never neglect the practices of our religion through fear of ridicule and scorn.

After the bishop has anointed the person he confirms, he immediately strikes him gently on the cheek. This is to remind him that being now made a soldier of Christ, he must manfully combat all his enemies, bear with meekness and patience all crosses, persecutions, and trials, for the sake and glory of his Lord. When striking the cheek, the bishop says: "Peace be with thee!" to teach the confirmed that the only way to true peace in this world and in the next is to suffer patiently for Christ's sake, and also to encourage them to do so by the hope of a reward, according to Our Lord's promise: "Learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart: and you shall find rest for your souls." (*Matt. xi. 29.*)

To receive Confirmation worthily it is necessary to be in the state of grace. Holy Scripture assures us that "wisdom will not enter into a

malicious soul, nor dwell in a body subject to sins." (*Wis. i. 4.*) The Sacrament of Confirmation requires spiritual life in him who receives it; for being instituted *to strengthen* spiritual life, we must possess it before it is received. But as mortal sin destroys the spiritual life of the soul, receiving Confirmation in that state confers no benefit, but the curse of heaven instead, and instead of being filled with the Holy Ghost and receiving His sevenfold gifts, the spirit of darkness takes possession of the soul and exercises his tyrannical sway.

The seven gifts of the Holy Ghost imparted to us in Confirmation are: Wisdom, understanding, council, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord.

Persons usually take an additional name in Confirmation, which ought to be the name of a saint, whom they choose for their particular patron.

At Confirmation, like at Baptism, a sponsor is required, who assumes similar duties in regard to the person confirmed as does the sponsor at Baptism. And as in Baptism the sponsors contract a spiritual relationship with their godchild and his parents, thus also in the Sacrament of Confirmation. This spiritual relationship is an impediment to marriage.

Like Baptism, the Sacrament of Confirmation imprints an indelible character upon the soul, which can never be effaced. Hence, like Baptism,

it can be received but once, and to receive it a second time would be a sacrilege.

OBJECTIONS

1. *Confirmation is not necessary to salvation: therefore neglecting to receive it is no sin.*

Want of opportunity, great distance, and other valid reasons are sufficient to excuse, as long as they exist, from sinning by the non-reception of Confirmation. But if this sacrament is neglected from contempt, or carelessness, or if scandal is given by not receiving it, the person acting thus would commit a mortal sin.

2. *In early Christian times the gift of miracles was often connected with the Sacrament of Confirmation: why is this no longer so?*

Because it is no longer necessary. Moreover, it belongs to God, and not to man, to decide what graces are to be conferred by a sacrament.

Example

THE GRACE OF CONFIRMATION ILLUSTRATED

St. Gregory of Nazianz relates: Julian the Apostate, resolving to make solemn profession of his return to idolatry, ordered preparations to be made for a sacrifice to the idols in one of the pagan temples. On the day appointed he went thither accompanied by his court, in great pomp, that the sacrifice might be offered with all possible magnificence. All being ready, he made a sign to the priests to begin the impious rite. But

what was their astonishment when they found themselves unable to proceed with it. Their knives, which they had well sharpened, could make no impression on the flesh of their victims, and the fire which they had lighted on the altar was suddenly extinguished. The sacrificing priest said: "There is some unknown power present that prevents our ceremonies." Then addressing the emperor, he observed: "Some one present must have been baptized or confirmed." Julian ordered that inquiry be made, when a boy, one of his pages, came forward and said: "Know, O emperor, that I am a Christian, and not long ago I was confirmed. I am anointed with the holy oil and strengthened for the combat. I believe in Jesus Christ, who redeemed me; I acknowledge Him alone for my God, and I glory in belonging to Him. It was I, or rather the God whom I serve, who prevented the impiety you were about to commit. I invoked the sacred name of Jesus Christ, and the demons, silenced, could not receive worship as gods. By that sacred name, the name of the true and only God, the devils have been put to flight."

The emperor, who had formerly professed Christianity, aware of the power of Our Lord Jesus Christ, was seized with terror, and fearing God's punishment, left the temple, covered with confusion, without uttering a word. The courageous young confessor of Christ immediately reported to the Christians all that had occurred.

They praised God, and acknowledged how terrible to the demons those are in whom the virtue of Jesus Christ dwells by means of the Sacrament of Confirmation, when it is received with the proper dispositions.



SAINT ANTONY OF PADUA

*Saint Antony, whom the Infant Jesus so loved and
honored, pray for us.*

CHAPTER V

The Sacrament of the Most Holy Eucharist.—Holy Mass— Holy Communion

THE Most Holy Eucharist is the sacrament which contains the body and blood, the soul and divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ under the appearance of bread and wine, or of either.

The word *eucharist* means *grace*, and also *thanksgiving*. This sacrament is called thus because it is a *special* grace and gift of God. For of all the gifts and graces bestowed upon us by God, there is not one more special than that conferred upon us by the Most Holy Eucharist. It is the greatest of all graces; for it confers not only particular graces, as the other sacraments do, but in it we receive Jesus Christ Himself, the Fountain and Source of all graces and gifts. The Blessed Eucharist also means *thanksgiving*; because Our Lord in instituting it gave thanks to His Father; and again, because in offering and receiving the body and blood of Christ under the appearance of bread and wine, we make a solemn act of thanksgiving to God for all His mercies and favors, particularly for His great mercy in becoming Man for our redemption.

We are assured that Jesus Christ changed bread and wine into His body and blood by His own words, spoken first when He *promised* that

He would give Himself to us, and, later, when He *fulfilled this promise* by instituting the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist.

In the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel we read that Our Lord performed a great miracle by feeding five thousand persons with five loaves and two fishes. They were filled with astonishment at the miracle, and next day they sought Him again. When they had found Him, Jesus, taking occasion from the impression made on their minds by the miracle, spoke to them about the heavenly food He was to give the world. He said: "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto life everlasting, which the Son of Man will give you." (*John vi. 27.*) This language excited their curiosity to know more about the heavenly food; they wished to know if it was better than the manna which God had given their fathers in the desert. "Then Jesus said to them: Amen, amen, I say to you: Moses gave you not bread from heaven, but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world." (*John vi. 32, 33.*) The Jews, amazed at hearing of such wonderful bread, said to Jesus: "Lord, give us always this bread." (*John vi. 34.*) And to this request Jesus replies: "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall not hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst." (*John vi. 35.*) The Jews, hearing this, did not believe Him, but

“murmured at Him, because He had said: I am the living bread which came down from heaven.” (*John* vi. 41.) Does Our Lord now, on account of this unbelief of the Jews, explain away the literal meaning of His words, that meaning in which they understood Him? No; but He impresses upon them the necessity of believing His words. He goes on to repeat what He had said before, and says, in the plainest terms: “I am the living bread which cometh down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world.” (*John* vi. 51, 52.) This assertion, in its plain and obvious meaning, proves in such clear terms Jesus Christ’s real presence in this bread of which He speaks that words more clearly and strongly expressive can not be found.

And the Jews naturally understood Him in that sense, in the sense that He meant to give them His real flesh to eat; but as they could not understand how this could be done, they “strove among themselves, saying: How can this man give us His flesh to eat? Then Jesus said to them: Amen, amen I say unto you: Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you.” (*John* vi. 53, 54.) These words clearly prove that the literal sense in which the Jews understood Christ, when He spoke to them of giving them His flesh to eat, was the very sense which He Himself meant, and that it was

His real flesh He promised to give them in this bread from heaven. To leave no room for doubt in the mind of any one, He repeats the same truth, without any change of terms. He says: "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up in the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed: and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me and I in him." (*John vi. 55-57.*)

It is certain, then, that Our Lord's words declare, in the plainest and strongest terms, the reality of His flesh, which He promised to give us, and that these words were taken in their literal sense by all who heard them. For: "Many therefore of His disciples hearing it, said: This saying is hard, and who can hear it?" "After this many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him." (*John vi. 61, 67.*) "Then Jesus said to the Twelve: Will you also go away? And Simon Peter answered Him: Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and have known that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God." (*John vi. 68-70.*) The apostles believe His words, as conveying that very meaning in which the others, who "went back," had refused to believe them; they believe them as containing a promise of giving them His real flesh to eat and His real blood to drink. They believe Him because He is the Christ, the Son of God, who by His almighty power can make

good His word and fulfil the promise He has made.

This Our Lord did at the Last Supper. "And whilst they were at supper Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke, and gave it to His disciples, and said: Take ye, and eat: This is my body. And taking the chalice, He gave thanks, and gave to them, saying: Drink ye all of this. For this is my blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many unto remission of sin." "Do this for a commemoration of me." (*Matt.* xxvi. 26-29; *Mark* xiv. 22-25; *Luke* xxii. 19, 20.) Christ said in plain words: "This is my body. This is my blood." Now, what was the impression made on the apostles when they heard these words? Certainly that Christ was then fulfilling the promise He had made some time before; that He then and there gave them His body and blood. They were prepared for the great miraculous gift; they expected it, and received it with a firm belief.

The Catholic Church, too, has always unanimously believed and declared that the words of Christ, "This is my body; this is my blood," are to be taken in their literal sense. St. Paul writes: "The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communication of the blood of Christ? And the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord?" (*1 Cor.* x. 16.) And: "Let a man prove himself: and so let him eat of that bread and drink of the chalice. For

he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord." (1 *Cor.* xi. 28, 29.) How can anybody eat and drink His judgment by a merely figurative partaking? If Christ be not really present in the Most Holy Eucharist how can anybody be justly punished with damnation for not "discerning" that which is not there to be discerned?

The writings of the holy Fathers and ecclesiastical authors of the early Christian centuries unanimously support the doctrine of the real presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. St. Ignatius the Martyr, a disciple of St. John the Apostle, writes: "The Most Holy Eucharist is the flesh of Our Saviour Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins, and which the Father, through His goodness, raised from the dead." St. Cyril of Jerusalem says: "Since Christ Himself did so affirm and declare of the bread, 'This is my body,' who shall henceforth presume to doubt it? And since He asserts and declares, 'This is my blood,' who shall doubt and say it is not His blood? By His own power, in Cana of Galilee, He once changed water into wine, and shall He be thought unworthy of belief in changing wine into His blood?"

If these and many other testimonies of the early Fathers do not prove their belief in the real presence, there is no meaning in what they have written. The inference, then, is this: that Jesus

Christ is really and truly present in the Most Holy Eucharist or Blessed Sacrament of the Altar; that He is as really there as He is in heaven, or "was made flesh and dwelt amongst us."

True, the Most Holy Eucharist is a great mystery of Faith, an incomprehensible miracle of divine omnipotence: yet no more so than the incarnation of the Son of God. It is the proof of the superabundance of His love.

By His *presence* in the Most Holy Eucharist Our Lord, however, has not exhausted His love and mercy for mankind. He became, moreover, in and by means of this sacrament the *Sacrifice of the New Law*.

From the beginning of the world the servants of God were always accustomed to offer sacrifice to Him by way of acknowledging His sovereignty and paying their homage to Him; and in all ancient forms of religion, true or false, this worship of sacrifice was always regarded as a most solemn act of religion, due to the deity worshiped. In the law of nature and in the law of Moses there was a great variety of sacrifices: some bloody, in which the victim was slain; others unbloody. Some were called holocausts, or whole-burnt offerings, in which the whole host or victim was consumed in fire upon God's altar; others were pacific or peace-offerings, which were offered for obtaining favors of God—the word "peace" in Scripture signifying all manner of good and prosperity.

All these sacrifices of the law of nature and of the law of Moses were of themselves but "weak and needy elements" (*Gal.* iv. 9), and only figures of a sacrifice to come, *viz.*, that of Jesus Christ; in consideration of which sacrifice only, and of the faith of the offerers by which they believed in the Redeemer to come, those ancient sacrifices were then accepted by the Divine Majesty, when they were accompanied with the inward sacrifice of the heart; but not for any intrinsic worth or dignity of the things offered, for no other blood but the blood of Jesus Christ could wash away sins. Hence St. Paul says, quoting from the psalm: "Sacrifice and oblation Thou wouldst not: but a body Thou hast fitted to me." (*Heb.* x. 5.) This gives us to understand that by reason of the insufficiency of the sacrifices of the Old Law, Christ Himself would come to be our sacrifice, and would offer up His own body and blood for us.

Accordingly Our Saviour Jesus Christ, at the time appointed by His Father, having taken flesh for us, was pleased to offer Himself a sacrifice for us, dying upon the cross for the sins of the whole world. By this one offering we were completely redeemed, inasmuch as our ransom was paid and all mercy, grace, and salvation were purchased for us. Nor can there now be any need of His dying any more or purchasing any other graces for us than those for which He has already paid the price of His blood.

Nevertheless, for the daily application of this one eternal redemption to our souls, and that the mercy, grace, and salvation which He has purchased for us may be actually communicated to us, He not only continually appears in our behalf in the sanctuary of heaven, there representing and offering to His Father His passion and death for us, but He also instituted the Blessed Eucharist the night before His passion, in which He bequeathed to us His body and blood under the sacramental veils, not only to be received by us as a sacrament, but also to be offered and presented by His ministers to His Father as a sacrifice: not by way of a new death, but by way of a standing memorial of His death: a daily celebrating and representing of His death to God, and an applying to our souls of the fruits thereof.

This Eucharistic Sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ daily offered under the forms of bread and wine in remembrance of His passion is what we call the MASS. This is the solemn liturgy of the Church. This is that pure offering which is made to God in every place among the Gentiles, according to the prophecy of Malachy: "For from the rising of the sun even to the going down, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean offering: for my name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts." (*Malach. i. 11.*) By this sacrifice Christ is a "Priest for ever according to the order of

Melchisedech" (*Ps. cix.*), whose sacrifice was bread and wine. (*Gen. xv.*)

This sacrifice of the Mass is the same in substance with that which Christ offered for us upon the cross; because both the victim offered and the priest or principal offerer is the same Jesus Christ. The difference is only in the *manner* of the offering, because upon the cross Our Saviour offered Himself in such a manner as really to shed His blood and die for us: whereas now He does not really shed His blood or die. And therefore this is called an unbloody sacrifice, and that of the cross a bloody sacrifice.

By virtue of this essential sameness, the sacrifice of the Mass completely answers all the different ends of sacrifice, and that in a way infinitely more effective than any of the ancient sacrifices. Christ is here both priest and victim, representing in person and offering up His passion and death to His Father.

This sacrifice of the Mass is offered up to God in the Catholic Church: First, as a daily remembrance of the passion of Christ: "Do this for a commemoration of me." (*1 Cor. xi. 24.*) Secondly, as a most solemn worship of the Divine Majesty. Thirdly, as a most acceptable thanksgiving to God, from whence the name of *Eucharist*. Fourthly, as a most powerful means to move God to show mercy to us in the forgiveness of our sins, for which reason we call it *propitiatory*. And lastly, as a most effectual way to obtain of

God all that we need, coming to Him, as we here do, with Christ and through Christ.

For these ends both priest and people ought to offer up the sacrifice of the Mass—the priest as Christ's minister and in His person; and the people by the hands of the priest; and both the one and the other by the hands of the great High Priest, Christ. And with this offering of Christ both the one and the other should make a total offering of themselves also by His hands, and in union with Him.

The sacrifice of the Mass is offered up to *God alone*. When we speak of a Mass in honor of the Blessed Virgin or of some other saint, we mean that it is offered to God in honor of these saints, in thanksgiving for all the graces bestowed upon them during life, and for the glory they now enjoy in heaven.

The sacrifice of the Mass is offered up to God for the whole Church—triumphant, militant, and suffering—in heaven, on earth, and in purgatory. Mass is offered, as mentioned above, in thanksgiving for the graces and glory God bestowed upon the saints; it is offered for those living on earth, just and sinners; for the just that they may persevere in grace; for the sinners, that they may be converted. Mass is offered for the souls in purgatory that they may be relieved in their sufferings and may obtain a speedy admittance to eternal glory.

Since Holy Mass is such an august sacrifice,

and since the grace and benefits we receive through it are so great and many, we ought not to content ourselves with assisting at it devoutly only on Sundays and holy days, when we are bound to do so under pain of mortal sin, but we should attend it as often as possible. But in order to gain the blessings of this holy sacrifice we must assist at it *with devotion*. This devotion consists in adoring Our Lord present on the altar with all our heart, and in offering, in union with His sacrifice, our whole being, thoughts, words, deeds, affections, heart, and soul to God.

Not content with living, suffering, and dying for us, with instituting the Most Blessed Eucharist in order to remain with us and to be our sacrifice, Our Lord Jesus Christ's incomprehensible love for us went still further: He also gives Himself to us as the food and nourishment of our soul. The spiritual, supernatural life which He imparts needs, like our natural physical life, to be fed and nourished; otherwise it will languish and be in danger of perishing. And our divine Lord revealed to us that as He is the source of this our true life, so He is Himself also its food and sustenance. He tells us that we must definitely and personally appropriate Him. "He that eateth me," He says, "the same shall also live by me." (*John vi. 58.*) He explains that we must be partakers of His sacred flesh and of His glorious life, once laid down for our sins, but now risen and ascended, and ever present as an aton-

ing and acceptable sacrifice—the blood of the New Testament. He says: “Except you eat of the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath everlasting life; and I will raise him up in the last day.” (*John* vi. 54, 55.)

The means whereby this most momentous nourishing upon Christ is accomplished is the Sacrament of the Most Holy Eucharist. This is the means appointed by our blessed Lord Himself, and it is clear, therefore, that this Holy Sacrament must on no account be neglected when it can be received. If we wilfully or carelessly refuse the means, we can not expect to receive the grace. Receiving the Blessed Eucharist is called Holy Communion.

“But let a man prove himself,” says St. Paul, “and so let him eat of that bread and drink of the chalice.” (*1 Cor.* xi. 28.) This proving one’s self is the first and most necessary preparation for receiving Our Lord in the Blessed Eucharist. It consists in looking diligently into the state of one’s soul, in order to discover its sins and unworthy dispositions, and to remove them by sincere repentance and confession; lest otherwise we become “guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord” (*1 Cor.* xi. 27), and receive “judgment to ourselves, not discerning the body of the Lord.” *Ib.* 29.) For this reason we are bound to confess our sins before Holy Communion.

The person about to receive Holy Communion must also be fasting from the previous midnight, by the command of the Church, and by a most ancient and apostolical tradition ordaining that in reference to so great a sacrament nothing should enter into the body of a Christian before the body of Christ. The case of approaching death by sickness is excepted, when Holy Communion is received by way of *viaticum*.

In favor of sick persons, however, whose illness is, or may be, of long duration, His Holiness Pope Pius X, by a decree of December 7, 1906, permitted that "persons who have been ill for a month or longer without any definite hope of speedy recovery may, with the advice of their confessor, receive Holy Communion after partaking of some *liquid* food. Persons living in houses where the Blessed Sacrament is preserved, or where Mass is periodically celebrated, enjoy this privilege once or twice a week; other persons, once or twice a month.

Besides preparing by confession and fasting, the communicant must endeavor to have the best possible devotion to dispose his soul for receiving so great a guest. To this end he is recommended:

1. To think well on the great work he is about to perform; to consider attentively Who it is he is going to receive, and how far he is from deserving such a favor, and to implore with fervor and humility God's grace. This should be the subject of his prayers and meditations for some

time beforehand, and more particularly the evening before his communion and the morning he receives it.

2. To propose to himself a pure intention, *viz.*, the honor of God and the sanctification of his own soul; and in particular, that by worthily receiving Christ in this heavenly sacrament he may come to a happy union with Him, according to His own words: "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me and I in him." (*John vii. 57.*)

3. To meditate on the sufferings and death of Our Redeemer: this sacrament being instituted to this end, that we should "show the death of the Lord until He come." (*1 Cor. xi. 26.*)

4. To prepare himself by acts of virtue, more especially of faith, hope, and charity, of humility and desire, so that he may approach to his Lord with a firm belief of His real presence in this sacrament, and of that great sacrifice which He heretofore offered upon the cross for our redemption, of which He makes us partakers; with an ardent affection of love to Him, who has loved us so much, and who out of pure love gives Himself to us; and with a great sentiment of his own unworthiness and sins, joined with a firm confidence in the mercies of his Redeemer.

How ineffably great, indeed, is Christ's love for us in the Blessed Sacrament of the Most Holy Eucharist! He is always present in it; in Holy Mass He sacrifices Himself for us; in Holy Com-

munion He unites Himself with us and becomes the nourishment of our souls. And this latter is the best manner and the most worthy means of thanking Him for His great love. It is, indeed, as Holy Church reminds us: "A sacred banquet, in which we receive Christ, are reminded of His passion, our soul is replenished with grace, and we receive the pledge of our future glory."

OBJECTIONS

1. *Faith teaches that Christ is in heaven: therefore He can not be really and truly, but only in a figurative sense, present in the Blessed Sacrament.*

The Council of Trent says: "There is no contradiction in the fact that Our Saviour, in the natural way of existence, always sits to the right of the Father, and nevertheless is present, in a manner of existence scarcely expressible in words is, in His substance, at the same time present in many other places." (*Sess. xiii. ch. 1.*) One and the same substance may be present in many places; therefore also the substance of the body of Christ. It can be substantially, essentially, really, and truly present in the Most Holy Eucharist, or, rather, the Most Holy Eucharist can be and is substantially the body of Christ.

2. *But how can Christ be present at the same time in so many places?*

Is not every grain of seed which we plant multiplied in the earth? Can we explain how? Do

we understand how the spoken word is multiplied in a way that hundreds hear and understand it, although but one person is speaking? We do not understand these and other like phenomena of nature, yet we can not but believe them. In like manner we must believe the mystery of the Most Holy Eucharist, although we do not understand it. If we understood it, it would be no mystery.

3. *The Catholic Church, therefore, teaches that a God is made from bread and wine.*

To assert this is blasphemy, misrepresentation or ignorance. The Church teaches that Christ is present under the appearances of bread and wine in the Blessed Sacrament, because the substances of bread and wine cease to exist in it and are replaced by the body and blood of Christ. That the soul and divinity of Christ are also there is brought about by the fact that, after His resurrection, He dies no more, and therefore His body and blood can not be again separated from His soul and divinity. Where Christ is, there He is entire, the whole, living, immortal, divine Christ. Therefore Christ is present under the appearances of both the bread and the wine—really, truly, essentially God and man.

4. *But the appearances of bread and wine remain after the act of consecration by which transubstantiation is effected.*

If we investigated more closely the processes of nature, we should find in this fact only another manifestation of divine omnipotence. For in-

stance, we see vapor rising in the air and forming clouds; and behold, drops of water—rain—pours from them; sometimes it assumes the form of snow or hail. Again, we stand on a substance hard and compact as iron, and some other day that substance flows past us in the shape of water. How different the forms assumed by the same substance! In a geological museum we observe a piece of wood; on touching it we find that it is stone. The substance was changed, but the form and appearance remained. Whoever believes that God is almighty will have no difficulty in believing transubstantiation, or Christ's real presence in the Most Holy Eucharist.

5. *St. Paul writes that Christ "needeth not daily, as the other priests, to offer sacrifice first for His own sins, and then for the people's, for this He did once, in offering Himself."* (*Heb. vii. 27.*) *Nevertheless the Catholic Church maintains that He offers Himself daily in Mass.*

St. Paul writes in the same epistle, shortly before the words quoted, "that He continueth for ever, hath an everlasting priesthood." (*Heb. vii. 24.*) Where there is a priesthood, there is also a sacrifice. Hence the Apostle again writes: "We have an altar, whereof they have no power to eat, who serve the tabernacle." (*Heb. xiii. 10.*) If the Christians had an altar, they also had a sacrifice. This sacrifice is the offering of the body and blood of Jesus Christ under the form of bread and wine, as appears clearly from the

words of the same Apostle: "The chalice of benediction, which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? And the bread, which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord?" (1 Cor. x. 16.) St. Paul here evidently speaks of the Most Holy Eucharist, and places it in contrast with the sacrifices of the Jews and pagans.

6. *The Catholic Church calls the Mass a propitiatory sacrifice for sins: was not full atonement for sin made by Christ on the cross?*

The Church does not teach that sins are remitted by assisting at Mass or by the offering for us of the Holy Sacrifice. Remission of sin is obtained in the Sacrament of Penance by contrite confession and priestly absolution. Through Holy Mass the grace of conversion, contrition and penance may be obtained, and thus it is a sacrifice of propitiation. For in Holy Mass Christ renews the sacrifice which He offered to His Father for the sins of mankind. The same divine blood which He once shed for our redemption is offered up in Holy Mass, particularly for the sins of those present at its oblation.

7. *I am not worthy to receive Holy Communion.*

Nobody is worthy to receive Holy Communion: yet Christ declared explicitly: "Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you." (John vi. 54.) A strange humility, indeed, that defies even

Christ's threats, and refuses to obey His command.

8. *At the institution of the Holy Eucharist Christ said, concerning the chalice: "Drink ye all of this," and yet the Catholic Church refuses the chalice to lay members.*

In the early times of the Church the faithful received Holy Communion under both forms, but its reception under both forms was not obligatory. The sick, prisoners, and those who could not receive in church received under the form of bread alone. Later the Church, for various reasons, adopted the latter form of Holy Communion as the general one. Among the reasons were, the danger of dishonor to the sacrament by the use of the chalice, the aversion of many to wine or to the use of a common chalice, etc. The principal reason, however, why the Church gives Holy Communion to the faithful in the form of bread is: She thereby intends to maintain the doctrine that Christ is present entirely under both appearances. Some heretics, especially those of the sixteenth century, contended that the Church erred when she gave Holy Communion in one form only. Therefore the Council of Trent confirmed the practice, long ago established, of communion under one form, and branded as erroneous the doctrine that it must be received under both forms.

9. *But the priest, when he celebrates Mass, receives Holy Communion under both forms.*

The forms of bread and wine are necessary in the holy sacrifice of Mass to symbolize the separation of Christ's body and blood on the cross; therefore the priest, in Holy Mass, receives under both forms. At the institution of the Blessed Sacrament Christ said the words: "Drink ye all of this" to His apostles and their successors in the priesthood, not to the faithful in general. The priest receiving Holy Communion when not celebrating Mass, for instance, on Holy Thursday, or in illness, receives it under the form of bread alone.

Examples

WHO IS RIGHT?

An artist once conceived the idea of refuting the erroneous doctrines of Luther and Zwingli concerning the Blessed Sacrament by means of his brush. He painted a picture wherein Christ was portrayed seated at the Last Supper, and on the same canvas were Luther and Zwingli. Beneath the picture these words were inscribed: Christ says: "This is my body." Luther says: "This will become my body." Zwingli says: "This symbolizes my body." Which of the three is right? This brief inscription is more convincing than a multitude of arguments.

ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA AND THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Among the errors professed by the Albigenes was the denial of the real presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Eucharist. One day St. Anthony

carried on a long discussion on this article of Catholic faith with an obstinate and influential heretic at Toulouse, where he was then preaching. Being pressed by the solid and luminous reasons of the saint, the heretic seemed to waver, even to the point of acknowledging the truth. He stopped short, however, and said: "Prove to me by a public miracle that Jesus is really present in the Eucharist, as you are striving to establish, and I shall at once renounce my doctrines and humbly submit myself to what you preach." The challenge was a solemn one; another would have hesitated to accept it. But Anthony, inspired by the Holy Spirit, tranquilly replied he would accept it. Then the heretic said: "I shall shut up my mule in its stable for three days, and deprive it of its feed. When this time shall have been passed, I will lead it into the public street, and before all the assembled people I will offer to feed it. But you, on your part, will bring the consecrated Host, and will show it to my mule. If the beast, in spite of its hunger, turns away from its feed and prostrates itself on both knees before your sacrament, I shall be convinced and declare myself a Catholic."

Anthony consented to this proposition and departed. He prepared himself by prayer to avenge Our Lord for the outrages inflicted on Him by the impiety of the unbelievers. He prayed to God for the conversion of so many souls whom error had led astray from the

Church. At length the day of trial came, and the heretic, followed by a large number of people, arrived at the appointed place, leading his mule by the bridle, and carrying the feed which he knew would be so welcome. During this time St. Anthony celebrated Mass with even greater fervor than ordinary. When he had finished he turned toward the scene where the power of Heaven was soon to be manifested. The saint held in his hands the ostensorium, in the center of which appeared the consecrated Sacred Host. Behind him walked many of the faithful, reciting prayers and hymns, impatient to see what would happen. When Anthony was in the presence of his adversary he stopped and recollected himself for an instant. Then he imposed silence on the multitude, and turning to the mule, thus spoke to it: "In the name of thy Creator, whom I truly carry in my hands in spite of my unworthiness, I say to thee, O animal deprived of reason, and I command thee to come at once with humility and do Him the reverence which thou owest Him." At the same time the owner of the mule spread out the feed for it to eat. But, O prodigy! the beast turned away from the feed, and, in obedience to the saint's command, knelt on both knees and remained in this position immovable. The people were loud in their enthusiasm, and broke out into cries of joy. The heretics, utterly confounded by their defeat, hastily retired, while the one who had provoked the miracle fell on his

knees and adored the august Mystery, which before he had called a superstition. He afterward became a Catholic and brought back to the truth his whole family. Some time later he built a church in honor of St. Peter. His descendants, to add to this gratitude and to perpetuate the memory of the miracle, built a chapel on the very spot where it occurred.

ST. WILLIAM AT HOLY MASS

It is related of St. William, Bishop of Bourges, that during the celebration of Mass he was so penetrated with the ardor of divine love that the tears flowed profusely from his eyes. He was wont to say: "When I consider that at Mass Jesus Christ offers Himself on the altar as a sacrifice to His Heavenly Father, I experience a pain so intense as if I saw Him before me dying on the cross on Calvary."

A FERVENT CHILD

A little boy, named Albinus, not having yet arrived at the age required for first communion, sighed often for the happy day on which he was to receive his God, hidden under the Eucharistic veil, and he spared no pains to prepare himself well for so holy an action. The innocence of his life, the great desire which he expressed, and the fervor and earnestness of his preparation, determined his confessor to admit him to Holy Communion at an earlier age than other children.

Albinus now redoubled his fervor and his efforts to purify his soul more and more, and to prepare it as a dwelling not unworthy of the Divine Guest who was about to visit it. Before his communion he made a retreat and a general confession. Although he had never sullied the robe of his baptismal innocence by mortal sin, yet the light of grace made him regard his slightest faults as grievous offenses, and caused him to be sorry to have offended, even venially, a God so good and loving, whom he was now to receive as the nourishment of his soul.

These sentiments were not a passing fervor. Albinus never forgot the happy day of his first communion, nor the engagements which he then contracted with God. The body and blood of Our Lord which he received produced in him a sensible increase in virtue and piety. Far from satisfying his spiritual hunger, this Heavenly Bread served but to increase it. He received Holy Communion every Sunday, knowing well that this heavenly food is as necessary for the soul as earthly nourishment is for the body, and that it is impossible to persevere in innocence and piety without frequently receiving this adorable sacrament.

ST. ROSE OF LIMA ON HOLY COMMUNION

Even as a child St. Rose of Lima had reached such a degree of innocence and virtue that her confessor admitted her at a tender age to Holy

Communion, and allowed her to receive it several times a week. Later he commanded her to describe the effects wrought in her soul by this divine sacrament. She wrote: "All I can say is, that no joy, no pleasure, no happiness can be compared with the rapture I experience by partaking of this heavenly and truly divine nourishment. It seems to me that in Holy Communion I receive into my soul the sun. For what the visible sun effects in the world by shedding light and warmth on all things, thereby decking the earth with plants and flowers, producing fruit and giving life, that is effected in the soul by the real presence in it of Our Lord's body."

CHAPTER VI

The Sacrament of Penance

THE sinner's reconciliation with God is effected by divine ordinance through the Sacrament of Penance. Our loving Lord, in His infinite mercy, instituted a sacrament for the remission of sins committed after Baptism, because man, even though regenerated and justified, is still liable to commit sin.

This sacrament is the Sacrament of Penance, which is defined by the Church as follows: Penance is the sacrament in which, by the ministry of the duly appointed priest, the sins committed after Baptism are forgiven to those that sincerely repent, and confess them.

All sins are forgiven by the power of God; for it is by an omnipotent power alone that they can be pardoned. But God has not reserved this power to Himself; He communicated it to the pastors of His Church. God remits sin by an absolute, sovereign, and independent authority; the pastors of His Church remit sins by a subordinate and dependent authority, which they have received from God. He certainly can, if it so pleases Him, confer this authority on man. That He did so is evident; for Christ said to His apostles, and in them, to their legitimate successors: "Peace be to you. As the Father hath

sent me, I also send you. When He had said this, He breathed on them: and He said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them: and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." (*John* xx. 21-23.)

This divine commission to forgive sins in Christ's name was always understood in the Church to mean what the words just quoted imply, *viz.*, that God has appointed certain men to grant or withhold the forgiveness of sins in His name. Christ left this power to the pastors of His Church when he addressed them, in the persons of the apostles, in these words: "Amen, I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven." (*Matt.* xviii. 18.) These words show that the pastors of the Church are invested with judicial power to loose and not to loose the bonds of sin, according to the merits of the case and the dispositions of the penitents. But how can the ministers of this sacrament pronounce a just sentence unless the penitents make known their sins to them and disclose the dispositions of their hearts? The priest who is called upon to remit or retain sins in the Sacrament of Penance must know of what sins the penitent is guilty; he must form a well-grounded judgment whether the penitent has the dispositions or not that render him fit to receive absolution. In a word, in the trib-

unal of penance the priest is a judge, and as such he must have full knowledge of the case upon which he has to pronounce judgment. This knowledge he can gain only by the penitent's confession.

The same law that obliges the penitent to confess his sins makes it also obligatory for him to *examine his conscience*; that is, to take a serious view of his soul, in order to discover of what sins he is guilty in thought, word, deed, or omission. In a matter of such consequence it is necessary to proceed with deliberation and with as much attention and composure of mind as reason and prudence require a person to adhibit in all matters of importance. Therefore, when preparing for confession, first of all beg of God the grace to make it well. It is not sufficient, in our examination of conscience, to take a superficial and cursory view of the outward, gross, and palpable offenses which are observable to every eye; but the interior, spiritual sins, which pride and self-love, human respect and worldly interest are most solicitous to hide and keep undiscovered, should be conscientiously inspected, because they are more dangerous and inflict deeper wounds than the notorious and scandalous sins which are openly committed. The secret recesses of the soul and folds of the heart must be closely searched in order to dislodge the corruption and venom that lurk there. The principles and motives upon which a person has acted must be

carefully considered and an impartial inquiry be made into our thoughts and desires, intentions, and inclinations, evil habits and customary failings, darling passions and favorite sins. To discover all this we need the assistance of God's grace, the divine light of the Holy Ghost, and should invoke it before our examination of conscience.

Unless a diligent examination of this kind is made we shall always remain a mystery to ourselves and strangers to the real state of our soul. Quicksighted enough to observe the faults of others, we are apt to be blind to our own; or, as our blessed Saviour says: "Why seest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, and seest not the beam that is in thy own eye." (*Matt.* vii. 3.) This interior blindness must be remedied and removed by diligent self-examination, and by humbly and fervently beseeching the Holy Ghost to open our eyes, to remove the veil that hides us from ourselves. We should allow ourselves sufficient time to probe the secrets of our conscience, and to consider what places, what persons, what occasions we have frequented; in what conversations, actions, and occupations we have passed our time; in what particulars we have strayed from rectitude; in what manner we have discharged the duties we owe to God, to our neighbor and to ourselves: so that we may be able to lay all our sins before the minister of Jesus Christ, with the number, as nearly as we can

recollect, and the circumstances that alter the nature of the sin or notably aggravate its guilt.

There is reason to apprehend that many confessions are defective and perhaps null and void for want of a diligent self-examination. How many seem at a loss even for sufficient matter for sacramental absolution at the very time when they would discover themselves to be in a very alarming state did they take the trouble of making a close inquiry into the condition of their soul.

The Council of Trent clearly and fully states the nature of *contrition* when it defines it to be "a grief of mind and a detestation of sin committed, accompanied with a resolution not to commit sin any more." (*Sess. xiv. ch. 4.*) Contrition, or inward sorrow for sin, is so essential a part of the Sacrament of Penance that the most complete confession will not purify the soul if it be wanting. It is to be dreaded that many persons deceive themselves in this point, and approach the sacred tribunal without that true sorrow of the soul which is essential. They persuade themselves that they are penitent, provided they perform certain exterior exercises of penance, recite some devout forms of prayer, without endeavoring to bring about real conversion or change of heart. How often, alas, are the feelings of nature, the workings of pride and self-love, the agitations of a false shame and confession, the anxiety and trouble that proceed from mere

human respect and servile fear mistaken for the substance and essence of repentance!

The contrition that qualifies the repentant sinner for the remission of his sins is an emotion excited by grace, proceeding from the operation of the Holy Ghost. It springs from the *love* or *fear* of God, being *supernatural*, based on motives of faith and religion. It is *universal*, that is, it extends, without exception, to every mortal sin of which we are guilty. It is also *supreme* and *sovereign*; that is, it is in reality greater than all sorrows; for as sin is the greatest of all evils, it must be hated and abhorred more than any other evil. Another property of true contrition is the *firm purpose of amendment*, with a will and desire to satisfy God's justice by bringing forth worthy fruits of penance and leading a new life: in other words, a firm determination never more to offend God by mortal sin, and to atone for past offenses.

We find many examples of such supernatural contrition in the gospel. "Zacheus, standing, said to the Lord: Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor: and if I have wronged any man of anything, I restore him fourfold." (*Luke* xix. 8.) Magdalen, weeping, knelt at the feet of Jesus, washed them with her tears and wiped them with her hair. And Jesus said to the bystanders: "Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much. But to whom less is forgiven, loveth less. And He said to her: Thy

sins are forgiven thee." (*Luke* vii. 47, 48.) Dumb with sorrow, the palsied man lay before Our Saviour: "And Jesus seeing their faith, said to the man sick of the palsy: Be of good heart, son; thy sins are forgiven thee." (*Matt.* ix. 2.) The Searcher of Hearts knew that the sick man was in greater sorrow because of his sins than because of his ailment. As an example of humility caused by true contrition, Our Lord places before us the publican: "And the publican, standing afar off, would not so much as lift up his eyes toward heaven, but struck his breast, saying: O God, be merciful to me, a sinner." (*Luke* xviii. 18.) Of St. Peter the gospel says: "And going forth, he wept bitterly." (*Matt.* xxvi. 75.) What true sorrow the penitent thief must have had when he said to our divine Redeemer: "Lord, remember me when Thou shalt come in Thy kingdom," to receive from Him the consoling promise: "Amen, I say to thee; this day thou shalt be with me in paradise." (*Luke* xxiii. 42, 43.)

These are examples of true contrition from *supernatural* motives. But even this so effectual contrition has two degrees: perfect contrition and imperfect contrition, also called *attrition*. Perfect contrition arises from a perfect love of God for Himself alone: it fills us with sorrow and hatred for sin because we thereby offend God, who is worthy of all love. Imperfect contrition, called *attrition*, is a hearty sorrow and detestation of sin for having offended God, which

the soul conceives from a less perfect motive, such as from the consideration of the deformity of sin, of our having lost heaven, or of our having deserved hell, or through fear of the judgments of God, and the like.

Thus perfect contrition is a hearty sorrow for sin, on account of the injury offered to God, without any reference to the evil sin brings on ourselves. It is so pleasing in God's sight that the moment a person has it God becomes reconciled to him, and forgives his sins before he receives sacramental absolution in the tribunal of penance, *provided* he has, at least, the implied intention of going to confession and receiving the Sacrament of Penance as soon as he can: the command of receiving that sacrament obligating all who have committed sin.

Contrition, then, whether perfect or imperfect, is "a hearty sorrow and detestation of sin for having offended God." Contrition, therefore, does not merely consist in discontinuing sin, with a resolution of living better in the future; it must necessarily contain a hatred of sin, a sincere detestation of it, which arises from a supernatural motive, not from a natural one. To be sorry for sin because it has been injurious to your health, your property or reputation is not sufficient, for that would be a *natural* motive, and sorrow proceeding from such a motive avails nothing in the Sacrament of Penance. Contrition requires that we are sorry for sin from a *supernatural* motive,

because by it we have offended God, and on that account have forfeited His grace and friendship, lost heaven and deserved hell.

Besides and together with a hearty sorrow and detestation of sin for having offended God, contrition requires that we have a *firm resolution of sinning no more*. No sinner was ever truly converted who had not an absolute will of relapsing no more into sin. Our Saviour Himself instructed us as to the necessity of this resolution by the words He addressed to the woman whom He pardoned: "Go, and now sin no more." (*John* viii. 11.) This resolution of sinning no more, in order to be firm, should be efficacious; that is, it should induce us to use every means necessary to avoid sin. For when a person exposes himself voluntarily to the occasions of sin, his resolution is not firm and his detestation of sin is not sincere.

After examining our conscience to learn how we have offended God by sin, and making an act of contrition, we must, in order to obtain remission, accuse ourselves of each and every sin of which we know ourselves guilty in confession. The qualities of a good confession are that it should be *entire, simple, sincere, humble, and sorrowful*.

A confession may be *entire* in two ways—either *materially* or *formally*. Confession is *materially* entire when a person confesses all the sins he has been guilty of, without omitting or forgetting any. Confession is *formally* entire when

a person, after examining his conscience with all the diligence in his power, tells all the sins he recollects. According to the Council of Trent, this formal integrity is only required and is sufficient for the validity of the sacrament. That is, a penitent is only obliged, after examining his conscience carefully, to tell in confession all the mortal sins he recollects. But if a man voluntarily conceals one mortal sin in confession, the confession of the rest avails him nothing, for divine grace can not enter a heart burdened with mortal sin, and by this very concealment he commits a new sin, that of sacrilege.

Confession must be *entire*. We must not only confess all our sins, but state also *how often* we have committed each one, as well as we remember, and we must also declare the circumstances which either change the nature of a sin or considerably increase its guilt.

Confession must be *simple*. A person should manifest to his confessor the state of his conscience such as it really is, omitting all superfluous circumstances; he should confess as certain what he knows to be certain and as doubtful what he judges to be doubtful.

Confession must be *sincere*. We should tell in confession every sin as it really occurred, without excuses or duplicity, without addition or diminution; neither omitting nor adding any aggravating circumstances. A penitent must accuse himself only of his own faults and sins; consequently

he should never mention those of others, except when he can not confess his own sins without discovering, at the same time, the sins of others. But on no account must he ever mention names.

Confession must be *humble*. True humility will ever prompt the penitent to impute all his sins and faults to his own malice; and conscious of his own misery, and the need he has of divine mercy, he will humble himself profoundly before God for all the evil he has done.

The effects of the Sacrament of Penance worthily received are most salutary. (1) It pardons the guilt of the sins, mortal and venial, which are repented of and confessed. (2) It infuses or increases sanctifying grace. (3) It remits the eternal punishment, if it was due. (4) It secures actual graces to avoid sin in future. (5) It may also remit, wholly or in part, the temporal punishment still to be undergone for sins whose guilt is pardoned.

After hearing the penitent's confession, and forming his judgment as to the remission or retention of the sins heard, the confessor imposes a penance, in satisfaction for the injury caused to God by sin. This *satisfaction* is a necessary part of the Sacrament of Penance. There are two kinds of satisfaction: one called *intended* satisfaction, or the desire of doing penance to satisfy the justice of God for our sins; the other called *actual* satisfaction, or the real per-

formance of the penance imposed by the priest for our sins.

Intended satisfaction, or the desire of satisfying God for our sins by making reparation, as far as we can, for the injury done to Him by sin is an essential part of true repentance, and is therefore absolutely required for the validity of the Sacrament of Penance. *Actual* satisfaction, or the real performance of our penance, is required for the *integrity* of the sacrament, which would be incomplete, but not invalid, without it, as it is not an essential part of the sacrament. Hence a penitent who forgets or is incapable of performing the penance enjoined, is excusable before God for not having made satisfaction, as he had the sincere desire of doing so.

The chief doctrines, then, taught by the Church on the Sacrament of Penance, as declared by the Council of Trent, are these: (1) Penance is a sacrament instituted by Christ for reconciling the faithful to God, as often as after Baptism they have committed sin. (2) Sacramental confession to a priest alone, which the Catholic Church has always practised, is not a human invention. (3) It is necessary by divine law to confess each and every mortal sin which, after due and diligent preparation, is remembered, and this even if they are secret sins, or sins of thought or desire, together with the circumstances that alter the character of the sin. This Council also renewed the precept enjoined by the Lateran Coun-

cil in 1215, that all the faithful must confess at least once a year. (*Sess. xiv. 1-8.*)

What led to the law of yearly confession was this. In the early times of the Church all who assisted at Mass communicated. When the first fervor relaxed, a law was enacted that they should communicate every Sunday; later, at least three times a year, at Easter, Pentecost, and Christmas. The Council of Lateran limited the obligatory reception of Holy Communion to once a year, during Easter time; and it added explicitly the obligation taught by St. Paul of cleansing the conscience from sin before partaking of the sacred body and blood of Christ. (*1 Cor. xi. 23.*) Thus it required confession at least once a year.

If any one have good reason to believe that his confessions hitherto were not good, he must make a *general confession*. A general confession is the repetition of one or more confessions. It is *necessary* for those whose previous confessions were invalid because of the want of sincerity, or of contrition and purpose of amendment, or of a diligent examination of conscience. It is *useful* and *commendable* to make a general confession at momentous periods in life; before receiving Holy Communion for the first time; when entering a new state of life; in a dangerous illness, to prepare for a happy death; at the time of a jubilee or mission, when the Church places the whole treasury of the graces of Christ at our disposal, and gives special faculties to confessors. A gen-

eral confession may be *harmful* in cases of unfounded scrupulosity, when a person that always tried to make good confessions is troubled with unreasonable doubts concerning them, and is really not in a condition to judge the state of his conscience.

By the Sacrament of Penance the guilt and *eternal* punishment are taken away, yet there remains some *temporal* punishment, which must be undergone either in this world or in the next. Now St. Peter, the vicar of Christ, received from Our Lord the power and authority to remove from man everything that closes heaven to him. Therefore the sovereign Pontiff, or Pope, and those who exercise authority under him, can remit to the repentant sinner the temporal punishment still his due. This remission of temporal punishment is called *indulgence*. In former times, when it was necessary, in order to prevent Christians from relapsing into paganism, and to preserve Christian discipline and morality, the Church imposed severe penalties for certain crimes. The penitents were refused the sacraments and not permitted to assist at Mass until after they had completed their penitential term. But when they showed extraordinary fervor, or were in danger of death, the bishops condoned their punishment. The same was done when holy martyrs about to suffer death for the Faith interceded for them.

In this manner the Church granted *indul-*

gences, and believed that the punishment thus condoned by her was also remitted by God. For what benefit would the indulgence have conferred if God had not also remitted the punishment? Later, when the penitential fervor of the Christians was relaxed, the Church remitted the established punishments more and more frequently, and prescribed in their place exercises of piety and good works; for instance, visiting a church, assisting at certain religious functions, receiving the sacraments, giving alms, etc. Images, also, and rosaries were endowed with indulgences; that is, whoever devoutly carries them or uses them for prayer may gain an indulgence. And by the very fact that the Church prescribes these works of piety and devotion for the gaining of indulgences, she reminds the faithful to be zealous in performing them.

There are two kinds of *indulgences*—*plenary* and *partial*. A plenary indulgence is the full remission of the temporal punishment due to sin. A partial indulgence is the remission of only a part of the same punishment. When the Church grants an indulgence, for instance, of forty days, of one year, of seven years, etc., this expression means that she remits by that indulgence so much of the temporal punishment as we would have gained in ancient times by a public ecclesiastical penance of so many days or years. By way of suffrage, indulgences, when granted in that form, may be applied for the relief and release of the

souls in purgatory. But God is not bound to accept them or apply them to the souls prayed for; still less do we know the exact extent of the benefit obtained. St. Augustine writes: "All suffrages offered for the dead profit those who while on earth lived so as to deserve to be profited."

The doctrine of the Church concerning indulgences, as defined by the Council of Trent, declares these two points: (1) That the Church has the power to grant indulgences; (2) that they are salutary to the Christian people.

Because indulgences are so beneficial we ought to strive to gain them whenever possible, either for ourselves or for the suffering souls. The conditions imposed by the Church for gaining an indulgence are:

1. To be in the state of grace. For how can a person expect remission of the temporal punishment of sin as long as sin itself and its eternal punishment are not remitted?

2. For gaining a plenary indulgence the usual conditions are: (1) To receive the Sacrament of Penance and Holy Communion. Confession is obligatory when prescribed, even if a person is not in the state of mortal sin. Persons, however, who are in the habit of receiving the sacraments weekly may gain the indulgences granted for that week without previous confession, if they are in the state of grace. (2) To visit a church and to pray there for the intention of the Pope.

(3) To observe all other conditions prescribed.

By granting indulgences the Church does not intend to relax, but to encourage true penitential fervor. Because this is often wanting, plenary indulgences granted by the Church are, in many cases, gained only partially.

The doctrine of the Catholic Church concerning the Sacrament of Penance, confession, and indulgences as here explained does certainly not tend to the relaxation of Christian morals, or to the encouragement of sin, nor does it facilitate the commission of crime, but promotes the exercise of every Christian virtue. If the practice of the Church seems lenient, let us remember the words of Christ after He had related the parable of the lost sheep: "I say to you, that even so there shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance, more than upon ninety-nine just who need not penance." (*Luke* xv. 7.) But let us also heed the warning of St. Alphonsus Liguori: "Procrastination of penance is procrastination of salvation, and without the special assistance of God's grace, loss of salvation for all eternity."

OBJECTIONS

1. *Confession is an invention of the priests.*

To assert this is to state an impossibility; for if confession were not a divine institution no Pope, bishop or priest could have introduced a practice so humiliating to human pride. Moreover, they are bound by the same law of con-

fessing their sins: had they introduced it, would they not have exempted themselves from its obligation? Moreover, to state that priests invented confession is to accuse them of the greatest folly. Or is it a pleasure for the priest to listen hours and hours, in heat and cold, to the pitiful story of human misery, sin, and crime? Again, the priest must be ready, at any hour of the day and night, to attend sick calls, to expose himself to deadly contagion in epidemics, in order to hear confessions: are such dangers incurred for pleasure? Moreover, by the silence imposed upon him by the seal of confession the priest is prevented from self-vindication when accused of crime. In many instances priests were falsely accused and innocently condemned to the most disgraceful punishments because they did not violate the seal of confession. No, priests did not invent an institution so onerous to themselves.

2. *By confession conscience is enslaved.*

By confession conscience is *eased*, not enslaved. Ask any one leaving the confessional after a contrite confession of his sins if he feels himself enslaved. He will answer: "By no means. I feel glad, contented, reconciled with God and relieved of a great burden."

3. *By his ordination the priest receives the power to remit sins: yet he says, in some cases, that he can not absolve.*

All sins committed after Baptism can be remitted in the Sacrament of Penance; but not

every sin can be remitted by *every* priest. In the Sacrament of Holy Orders the priest receives the power to remit sins; but for the *legitimate exercise* of this power he needs a special faculty (jurisdiction) from his bishop. In the Sacrament of Penance the priest exercises the functions of a judge. A judge can exercise his jurisdiction only concerning those who are consigned to him by law, and only in such cases as are not reserved to a higher court. In a like manner the priest, in the tribunal of penance, can exercise jurisdiction only over persons placed under his charge, and in cases not reserved to a higher judge. Following an ancient and salutary practice, the Pope and the bishops reserve the absolution from certain grievous crimes to themselves, and other priests can absolve from these only after receiving the special faculty to do so. In danger of death, however, all reservation of sins ceases, so that no sinner may die without absolution.

4. *But the practice of questioning in confession—how very annoying!*

The penitent desires either to make a good confession or not. In the former case he will be glad and grateful for any assistance the confessor may give him by appropriate questioning. In the latter case any and every question, even the most necessary one, will appear irksome. For such a person it were better if he had not come to confession, for in his state of mind he commits a sacrilege by attempting to receive absolution. If

a person shows by the method of his confession that it is unnecessary to ply him with questions, they will not be asked. As to the confessor's duty of questioning penitents, the laws of the Church are so strict and positive as to preclude any danger that might arise therefrom.

5. *The Catholic doctrine of indulgences is not found in the Bible.*

Holy Scripture relates many instances how God imposed temporal punishments on His servants *after* He had forgiven them their sins. Thus Moses was not permitted to enter the land of promise for doubting the Lord's word: his sin was forgiven, but he had to undergo the temporal punishment. We have seen that the Church has power to remit such punishment, and that she exercises this power by granting indulgences to the faithful. St. Paul granted an indulgence to the Corinthian whom he had excommunicated for the crime of incest. After the sinner had proved his repentance by doing penance, and when his fellow-Christians interceded for him, the Apostle remitted to him the rest of his temporal punishment, writing: "What I have pardoned, if I have pardoned anything, for your sake have I done it in the person of Christ." (2 Cor. ii. 10.) According to his own words the Apostle remitted in Christ's place the penitent's remaining temporal punishment.

6. *The traffic in indulgences is a disgrace to the Catholic Church.*

To speak of a "traffic in indulgences" in the Catholic Church is a distortion of facts. The Catholic Church never made traffic in indulgences. With her divine Founder she teaches that almsgiving is a good and meritorious work, and to it Holy Scripture, both in the Old and New Law, ascribes the power of releasing from sin. "For alms deliver from all sin and from death, and will not suffer the soul to go into darkness." (*Tob. iv. 11.*) "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." (*Matt. v. 7.*) These texts prove that God remits the punishment incurred by the sinner more readily on account of almsgiving. For this reason the Church sometimes added almsgiving to the good works which she always enjoins as a condition for the gaining of an indulgence.

7. *The Church has no jurisdiction over the souls of the departed: yet she exercises it by granting indulgences to them.*

The Church does *not* grant indulgences to the souls of the departed: but she teaches that *we* may *aid* them by way of suffrage. And Holy Scripture exhorts us to do so, saying: "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead." Although the departed souls are no longer under the jurisdiction of the Church, she can nevertheless offer to God for their release the treasury of graces, consisting of the merits of Christ and the saints, which is entrusted to her, at the same time praying that He may accept

them and deliver the suffering souls from their prison.

Examples

A REPENTANT SINNER

The great servant of God, Peter of Corbeil, Archbishop of Sens, was one day asked by a man to hear his confession. He did so, and willingly listened to the tale of the many and great crimes of which the penitent, with copious tears, accused himself. After finishing his confession, the poor sinner asked the archbishop: "Will God pardon these my grievous sins?" He replied: "Why not? That is, if you are really sorry for them and perform the penance which I shall give you." "O Father," cried the penitent, "I will perform any penance thou shalt impose on me. Would that I could die a thousand times in reparation for my sins." The archbishop now imposed upon him a penance of seven years. But the penitent exclaimed: "Is that all? Only seven years' penance for the many and great crimes of which I am guilty? I could not atone for them if I lived till the end of the world and daily performed all the penitential works ever done by all the saints." Convinced by these fervent words of the man's good disposition, the archbishop commuted the penance into a three days' fast on water and bread. Again the penitent wept profusely and implored his confessor to take pity on his soul and to give him a more severe penance. Now the archbishop said to him: "Say the Lord's

Prayer here in my presence with true devotion and contrition." The penitent seemed to hesitate, and then, summoning all his fervor, began to recite the Our Father. But before he could complete it he was so overwhelmed with sorrow that, falling to the floor, he breathed forth his soul, dying from the effects of the contrition he felt.

A MARTYR TO THE SEAL OF CONFESSION

Wenceslaus, King of Bohemia, dissolute and immoral, tried to induce St. John Nepomucene, confessor of the queen, to reveal to him what she had told him in her confessions. The saint, struck with horror at the proposal, represented to him the impossibility of satisfying his desire and the enormous guilt incurred by such an attempt. Sullen and morose, the king desisted. Some time later, having invited the saint to a banquet, he treated him with marked respect, but finally renewed his impious proposal, promising inviolable secrecy and abundant riches and honors in case of his compliance, and threatening him, in the event of refusal, with horrible tortures and a cruel death. Seeing, however, that he could make no impression on the heroic confessor, the tyrant flew into a rage and ordered him to be taken to prison and cruelly tortured. The queen, informed of what was passing, hastened to her husband, and by tears and entreaties obtained the saint's release. When his wounds were healed he appeared again at court, but he felt that his time

was short, and prepared himself by prayer and penance for death. The sight of the holy man revived the king's sacrilegious curiosity, and he ordered him to reveal at once his wife's confessions or prepare to die.

The saint made no answer, but by his silence and composed countenance expressed his readiness to suffer death rather than be a traitor to his duty. Whereupon the king cried out to his attendants: "Away with him, and as soon as it is dark throw him in the river!" His barbarous order was executed the same evening. But no sooner was the deed done than a heavenly light appeared floating over the body of the saint, which prodigy attracted many of the citizens to the river banks. Next morning the terrible crime was discovered, and the canons of the cathedral, going in procession to the spot, deposited the precious remains in a neighboring church. They were afterward removed to the cathedral amid a vast concourse of people, on which occasion many sick and crippled were miraculously cured through the intercession of the saint.

This glorious martyr to the seal of confession achieved his victory on May 16, 1383, being the feast of Our Lord's ascension.

THE SO-CALLED TRAFFIC IN INDULGENCES

Pope Leo X desired to complete the building of St. Peter's Church in Rome, begun by his predecessor, Julius II. In furtherance of his

object he proclaimed, in 1514, an indulgence, to be gained by all who contributed toward its completion. Albrecht, Prince-Archbishop of Mayence, was ordered to have the indulgence proclaimed and the contributions gathered in Germany. He selected a Dominican, Father John Tetzel, to proclaim the indulgence, and instructed him to join a call to penance and true conversion with the proclamation. According to the archbishop's direction and in consonance with the papal bull, all those who desired to gain the indulgence were obliged to make a contrite confession of their sins, to fast on the day before, and to receive Holy Communion on the day after confession. The confessors received special faculties to absolve from reserved sins, as is customary during a jubilee. In addition a visit to seven churches, or where there were not so many, to seven altars, was to be made and proper prayers said there for the welfare of the Church. The alms to be given were proportionate to the station and means of the giver, but were in no way apportioned with regard to the grievousness of the sins committed. The confessors were specially instructed "to permit no one to depart without any grace whatsoever, because the salvation of souls was no less considered than the furtherance of the building. Those having no money ought to make good their deficiency by prayer and fasting, for heaven should be opened to the poor as well as to the rich."

What is there offensive in these directions? Where is the "traffic in indulgences" of which the Church is accused? Who can deny that a pecuniary contribution toward the building of a church that was intended to become the glory of all Christendom was a good and pious work, and was consequently an appropriate condition for gaining an indulgence? The same had been done in preceding centuries, and nobody then regarded it as a "traffic in indulgences"; and we, to-day, do not regard it as such whenever the Pope prescribes almsgiving as a condition for gaining the jubilee indulgence, or when he grants an indulgence to incite to liberality in aiding foreign missions. And God Himself rewards alms given to the poor with heaven. There was, then, absolutely no reason for the cry of "traffic in indulgences," or for breaking away, on account of this indulgence, from the Pope and the Church.



SAINT TERESA

"A broken and contrite heart, O Lord, Thou wilt not despise."—Last words of St. Teresa.

CHAPTER VII

The Sacrament of Extreme Unction

EXTRME UNCTION is the sacrament which, through the anointing and prayer of the priest, gives health and strength to the soul, and sometimes to the body, when we are in danger of death by sickness. When our divine Lord sent out His disciples, and they "anointed many that were sick and healed them" (*Mark vi. 31*), it was a token of this sacrament, which He instituted for the healing of those members of His Church who are ill in body or soul.

That Extreme Unction is a sacrament is proved as follows: It has all the requisites of a sacrament: (1) The *outward sign*, consisting of the matter and form. The matter is the anointing of the senses with olive oil especially blessed for the purpose; the form is the prayer pronounced for the pardon of sins. (2) It gives the *grace signified*, besides the increase of sanctifying grace, and confers it by strengthening the soul and removing the remnants of sin. (3) The institution by Christ is shown by St. James, who says: "Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up:

and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him." (*James* v. 14, 15.) Except for its institution by Christ, the apostles would not have introduced a rite and ascribed to it effects which God alone can produce, as is done here by St. James; therefore God must have connected them with it. The apostles could not give to outward acts and ceremonies the power of producing grace, pardon or any other spiritual effects, as it is God alone who can give grace. When, therefore, St. James declares and mentions these effects, it is and must be in virtue and in consequence of the institution by Christ.

The oil used in the administration of this sacrament is blessed by the bishop, but a priest may bless it if delegated to do so by the Pope. From the inunction with oil this sacrament has received its name. The designation of "Extreme Unction" is employed because, as a rule, we receive this inunction with oil lastly among the inunctions ordained by the Church; that is, after those made in Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders. For this sacrament may be received only in time of such illnesses that by their nature are considered dangerous to life. If there be repeated danger of death in one sickness, the sacrament may also be received repeatedly.

Oil is used in the administration of this sacrament to signify its effects. For as oil is applied for healing sickness and curing wounds, so this sacrament is instituted for the healing of the ills

and wounds of the soul. Christ, in His mercy, instituted this sacrament especially for the sick, because they are in need of the special assistance of divine grace in their combat with illness and death.

By this sacrament the sick person receives, first, increase of sanctifying grace. Secondly, it remits venial sin and guards him against falling in temptations to mortal sin. It shortens the duration of purgatory and entitles us to greater glory in heaven. Thirdly, this sacrament extinguishes, or at least diminishes, the inclination to sin, the repugnance to virtue, and remits the temporal punishment of sin. For as a bodily illness leaves us, after recovery, in an enfeebled state, thus does also sin, although forgiven, leave our soul in a state of spiritual weakness, and has other evil consequences. These might be overcome by a truly penitential life; but when there is no longer time for it, or if we, when we had the time, neglected it, the Holy Ghost, by the effects of this sacrament, causes their removal. It depends on our preparation and disposition whether we receive more or less grace in this sacrament.

Though at all times, as St. Peter tells us, our "adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 *Peter* v. 8), yet he redoubles all his force and all his art when our last moments arrive; for he knows he has then only a short time to make his assaults upon us. And these assaults are not the same

with regard to all persons. He varies them according to the dispositions of the souls he is endeavoring to ruin. There are some whose damnation he tries to bring about by presumption; that is, by suggesting to them very good thoughts to all appearance, such as: "God is good and merciful; concealing from them at the same time the enormity of their past crimes. Others he tries to deceive by inducing them to dwell in their thoughts continually on their families and property, and the pleasures they are about to leave, thus diverting their thoughts from the eternal welfare of their soul. But his most common temptation is to terrify poor sinners with alarm and fear at their past sins, in order to cast them into despair; as St. Cyril of Alexandria writes: "What terror, what trembling, what a combat attends a soul leaving the body! In that dreadful hour a multitude of wicked spirits will surround you, reminding you of all the sins you have ever committed in your whole life, either in thought, word, deed, or omission." St. Hilarion, when on the point of death, was filled with such fear that to encourage his soul he said: "Go forth, my soul; why dost thou fear? For seventy years thou hast served God, and now thou art afraid to die?"

If the saints themselves were thus terrified at the hour of death, what are sinners to expect when their poor souls come to this great and last struggle? What can we do? If left to ourselves we shall surely perish. It is to meet these last

frightful assaults of hell that Our Lord has instituted the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, by which we are enabled to overcome them.

To receive the full benefit of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction it is necessary to be duly prepared for its reception. There is a *remote* and a *proximate* preparation. The remote preparation consists in often imploring God's aid to receive, in due time, this holy sacrament. Let us often remember the dangers of death surrounding us everywhere and ask of God the grace of being preserved from a sudden and unprovided death. To render ourselves more worthy of this grace it is well that we remind the sick among our friends and acquaintances in due time to receive this sacrament, especially when relatives omit to do so, or are inclined to do so only at the last moment, when the patient's condition is such as to render the effects of the sacrament doubtful.

The proximate preparation is intended to enable the sick person to receive the Sacrament of Extreme Unction *worthily, opportunely, and with the due dispositions*. To receive it *worthily*, we must be in the state of grace, because it is one of the sacraments instituted to *increase* grace, and consequently presupposes the state of grace. Therefore, as a rule, this sacrament is administered after the sick person has received the sacraments of Penance and the Blessed Eucharist. He should prepare himself for it by a good confession, and humbly receiving absolution for all

his offenses against God. If he is conscious, but deprived of speech, though otherwise in his senses, he should make an act of contrition in his heart, and his sins will be forgiven by Extreme Unction. To receive this sacrament *opportunately*, its reception must not be deferred to the last moments, when there is danger that the sick person may be deprived of the use of reason; rather let him receive it as soon as the illness is pronounced dangerous. The better he is able to prepare himself, the more graces will he receive.

Another disposition for receiving Extreme Unction is to be resigned to the will of God by making acts of faith, love, hope, confidence, and submission. Sick persons, it is true, are not forbidden to employ all lawful means to regain their health, but they should at the same time be resigned to the will of God, saying with our suffering Lord: "Not my will, but Thine, be done."

When the priest is called to administer the last sacraments to a sick person, everything that he requires for the purpose should be prepared in the sick room. The preparations to be made are these: Have the room, the surroundings and the patient himself properly in order. Place a table near the bed and in the patient's full view. Cover this table with a clean white cloth. On the table place a crucifix. On each side of the crucifix place a wax candle to be lighted when the priest enters with the Blessed Sacrament. On the left side of the table place a small open vessel with holy

water, and in it put a twig of cedar or something similar to answer for a sprinkler. Place on the right side of the table a plate with several small balls of cotton, and an open vase with some salt; also a small glass about half filled with fresh water, and a towel or napkin. This water should afterward be given to the sick person to drink, or thrown into the fire. Before the patient receives Holy Communion place under his chin, across the breast, a white cloth. Avoid all noise and excitement. When the priest enters, let all present kneel. Do not engage the priest in conversation. Do not keep him waiting. Place a stool before the table for him to kneel on and a chair at the patient's bedside.

When the priest has placed the Blessed Sacrament on the table, let all retire until after the sick person's confession is heard. Let them re-enter when Holy Communion and Extreme Unction are administered, and kneel in prayer.

When Extreme Unction is administered, the patient's head must be uncovered, his hands must be visible and his feet bare for the anointing. The personal cleanliness of the sick person must be attended to before the priest's arrival. After the priest has left the house the cotton and salt which he used, if left, must be burned. If the sick person did not drink the water in which the priest purified his fingers, it also must be cast into the fire.

After the administration of the last sacraments

the sick person must be left to his devotions for some time, and, if necessary, assisted in them, and ought not to be distracted by needless attentions and remarks.

OBJECTIONS

1. *The very mention of Extreme Unction alarms the sick and makes their condition worse.*

The physician's coming and his diagnosis of the illness also often alarms the patient; yet he is called and his directions are observed. Many sick persons appear quite patient, tranquil, and resigned to the will of God after receiving Extreme Unction, whilst before they were restless and irritable, and feared to die. This tranquillity and resignation greatly enhances the chances of recovery. One reason why Extreme Unction so seldom affects bodily health is because its reception is delayed till the last moment.

2. *According to St. James, Extreme Unction remits sin: why, then, is confession demanded before its reception?*

We must confess our sins before receiving Extreme Unction because it is a sacrament of the living; that is, a sacrament that can be received worthily only in the state of grace. Extreme Unction is a remedy. As remedies are for the living and not for the dead, this sacrament is only for souls that have the spiritual life. Extreme Unction remits sin in so far only as it makes good the deficiencies of the sick person, who, perhaps,

on account of physical pain or mental weakness, can not confess his sins properly, nor perform an austere penance. In such and similar cases Extreme Unction is supplementary to the Sacrament of Penance.

Examples

ST. MALACHY AND THE DYING WOMAN

St. Bernard, in his life of St. Malachy, tells us that a woman who lived near Bangor, in the north of Ireland, being at the point of death, sent for St. Malachy, who prepared to give her Extreme Unction. But to her friends it seemed better to have the administration of the sacrament deferred till the next morning, when she might be better prepared to receive it. St. Malachy yielded to their entreaties, though with great unwillingness. The holy man retired, but was disturbed during the night by lamentations and cries that the woman was dead. He rose and went to the corpse, accusing himself of neglect of duty. With those present he spent the night in prayer; and behold, at the break of day the deceased woman opened her eyes, sat up and greeted St. Malachy with a bow. At this sight all present were amazed, and their sadness was turned into joy. St. Malachy anointed her without delay. The woman recovered her health and lived for some time.

THE PIOUS CHILD

A man who was dangerously sick had an only

daughter, a child about ten years old, who had learned her Catechism well, and was therefore instructed in the truths and practices of our holy religion. She stood by the bedside of her dying parent, and seeing no preparation for his receiving the sacraments, she said: "Father, you are very sick. The doctor has just said that you shall not live longer than to-morrow. Now I have heard in my Catechism instructions that it would be sinful to allow the sick to die without being prepared by the priest, and yet no one sent for him. Do, father, do send for a priest."

Affected by the artless simplicity and earnestness with which these words were said, the dying man replied: "My dear child, I thank you. Go for the priest at once, and may God bless you; for to you, under God, I owe my salvation." The priest came and administered the last sacraments to the dying man, who expired the next day. How consoling to the good little daughter to reflect during life that she had been the means of saving her father's soul!

CHAPTER VIII

The Sacrament of Holy Orders

HOLY ORDERS is the sacrament by which bishops, priests, and other ministers of the Church are ordained and receive the power and grace to perform their sacred duties. Concerning Holy Orders the Council of Trent teaches: (1) In the New Testament there is a visible and external priesthood, and the power of consecrating and offering the body and blood of Our Lord, and of remitting and retaining sins. (2) Besides the priesthood, there are in the Catholic Church other orders, greater and less, by which, as by so many steps, the priesthood is approached. (3) Holy Orders is truly a sacrament instituted by Christ. (4) By sacred ordination the Holy Spirit is given, and it is not in vain that the bishop says: "Receive the Holy Ghost"; by it a character is impressed, and who has once been a priest is always a priest. (5) The sacred anointing which the Church uses in ordination is required, and is not contemptible and harmful; so, too, of the other ceremonies of ordination.

Our divine Lord empowered His apostles to ordain successors and assistants to participate in the same sacred ministry for which they themselves were ordained. The Church always ad-

hered firmly to this divine ordinance, and only they can licitly and validly administer the sacraments and perform other acts of divine cult who are duly ordained to this ministry. This for the following reasons:

1. They who serve the sanctuary must be set aside for this service by a special sanctification. Only ordained priests and levites were permitted in the Old Law to serve the sanctuary and to touch the Ark of the Covenant. The high priest alone was permitted to enter, once a year, the Holy of Holies, there to offer up the great Sacrifice of Atonement. Would it not be a contempt of holy things if, in the New Law, everybody were permitted to perform the acts of the divine cult without previous ordination and sanctification?

2. A religious cult at whose services any and everybody was permitted to act as minister would neither impress nor edify. Only when people are convinced that the minister who acts as mediator between God and man is empowered to perform the duties of his ministry by special consecration will they attend the services of divine cult with due reverence.

3. Contempt of the priestly office would unavoidably cause great confusion in the Church. Everybody would claim the rights of a priest, and no priest would receive the respect and veneration due to his high office. Thus the members of the Church would cease to be united in one body,

the communion of saints would be destroyed, and public worship in common would be impossible.

4. The priest's office is to confer grace on man through the administration of the sacraments. To do this he must have a supernatural power. This power he receives from Christ. It was not given to all the faithful, but only to the apostles and their successors. Therefore he who can not prove that he received his power from a successor of the apostles can not confer heavenly grace on man. This power is continually conferred by the bishops on the priests ordained by the Sacrament of Holy Orders. Hence this sacrament is essential for the existence of the Catholic Church.

"As the ministry of so exalted a priesthood," says the Council of Trent, "is a divine thing, it was meet, in order to surround it with the greater dignity and veneration, that in the admirable economy of the Church there should be several distinct orders of ministers, intended by their office to serve the priesthood, and so disposed as that, beginning with the clerical tonsure, they may ascend gradually through the lesser to the greater orders." Of these orders there are seven; some are greater, and they are called "holy," some lesser, and they are called "minor" orders. The greater, or Holy Orders, are: Sub-deaconship, deaconship, and priesthood. The Episcopacy is included in the Order of Priesthood, it being its plenitude. The lesser or Minor Orders are: Porter, lector, Exorcist, and Acolyte.

These seven distinct offices are called orders because they are so many different steps or degrees by which the sacred powers of the priesthood are gradually communicated to him who enters the ecclesiastical state. For he must begin with the lowest, that of porter, or door-keeper, and so gradually ascend to the higher degrees.

These different orders form the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy. With regard to the power of orders, all bishops are on an equality, as being successors of the apostles. But as we have said when speaking of the Pope, or head of the Church, the Bishop of Rome, successor to St. Peter, has, by divine right, a superiority or *primacy*, not only of honor and dignity, but also of authority and jurisdiction, over all the other bishops. The bishops are, also by divine right, superior to the priests in authority and jurisdiction, as well as in orders.

The Bishop of Rome, or Pope, has, by divine institution, universal jurisdiction. The other bishops have power to govern their own dioceses only, to which they have been assigned by the Pope. Their jurisdiction is attached to their See, and is therefore called *ordinary*, to distinguish it from *delegated* power. The bishop's ordinary jurisdiction is shared by his vicar-general, who forms one tribunal with him. A group of dioceses is called a *province*; its principal See is occupied by an *archbishop* or *metropolitan*; the other bishops are his *suffragans*. He can entertain

appeals from their decisions, and can, if necessary, visit their dioceses and correct what may be amiss. A *primate* stands toward several archbishops in the same relation that they stand toward their suffragans. Some primates are called *patriarchs*; it does not alter their jurisdiction.

The Church demands of candidates for Holy Orders that they be blameless in every respect and worthy of their sacred office. They must also offer themselves of their own free will for the service of God. They must have acquired the knowledge corresponding to the degree of the sacred ministry to which they aspire, and must have attained the prescribed age, one that warrants the supposition that they can and will fulfil the duties they are about to assume. The candidates are required to prepare themselves for the reception of Holy Orders by prayer, fasting, and other spiritual exercises. The faithful, too, are exhorted to implore God to give them good and worthy ministers of the altar. For this reason ordinations, at least to the higher grades, are, as a rule, conferred during the ember days. The bishop, too, prepares himself for the ordinations by prayer and fasting. Ordinations always take place during Mass.

All those in Holy Orders in the Latin portion of the Church are bound, as a matter of discipline, to observe *celibacy*. They can not validly marry, nor may a married man become a sub-

deacon unless his wife vow perpetual chastity. The practice of celibacy was common in the early Church, but it was not obligatory by law. In the Greek Catholic Church of to-day no priest can marry; but married men may receive Holy Orders, except episcopal consecration.

Although the priest after ordination continues subject to the weakness and temptations of human nature, his dignity surpasses that of every prince and potentate of this world, and even that of the angels in heaven. Therefore the priesthood deserves the highest honor, respect, submission, and obedience. Contempt for the priesthood is contempt for our divine Lord Himself, who said to His apostles: "He that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that despiseth me despiseth Him that sent me." (*Luke* x. 16.) The priests are appointed by God to be the judges over His people in all things that pertain to the salvation of their souls; to be their rulers in all that regards religion; to be their spiritual fathers and directors. By them we are made Christians, are received into the Church; by them we are delivered from our sins and reinstated into the grace and favor of Almighty God; by them we receive His blessings, and are nourished not only with the spiritual food of God's word, but also with the heavenly food of Christ's most precious body and blood in the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist; by them we offer to God the most holy Sacrifice of the New Law; by them, finally, the sacra-

ments are administered and heaven is opened to us.

Again, besides the love, reverence, and respect we owe to the Pope, bishops, and priests of the Church, we must also *obey* them in all things that relate to our eternal salvation. To them our blessed Saviour committed the keys of His kingdom, by which they have power and jurisdiction for the conservation and increase of virtue and piety in the Church; and this power, since it comes from God, we are bound to obey, as the Apostle says: "Obey your prelates, and be subject to them. For they watch as being to render an account of your souls, that they may do this with joy, and not with grief." (*Heb. xiii. 17.*)

Besides, we must not only love, honor, and obey them, but we must also contribute with a willing heart to their support. For St. Paul says: "They that serve the altar partake with the altar. So also the Lord ordained that they who preach the gospel should live by the gospel." (*1 Cor. ix. 13, 14.*) And: "Who serveth as a soldier at any time, at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?" (*1 Cor. ix. 7.*) Of the Gentiles to whom the Gospel had been preached, he writes: "If they have been made partakers of their spiritual things, they ought also in carnal things minister to them." (*Rom. xv. 27.*)

A pious, learned, and zealous priest is the

greatest blessing God can bestow on a community; therefore the faithful ought to pray fervently to God for such priests. But they ought also strive to deserve such priests by sincere devotion to Holy Church, by true reverence for the priesthood, by the frequent employment of the priest's ministry to receive sacramental grace, and by sincere gratitude for all spiritual benefit received. The scarcity of priests undoubtedly is often a punishment: God refuses His gifts, or at least gives them more sparingly, to those who do not appreciate them.

Can Catholic parents who regard the priestly dignity and office in the light of Faith conceive a greater privilege and happiness than to have a son in this great and holy state? The parents who gave him to the Church certainly have a share in the blessings of his work and in its reward. It is especially the mother who may exercise great influence in fostering the vocation to the priesthood in her boy. Let her offer up the child with whom she was blessed to God from very infancy. Let her continue imploring Our Lord to call him to His special service. Let her raise him from his tender years in true piety and fear of God, and if she observes signs indicating that her boy inclines, in the course of years, to the priesthood, let her explain to him that love of God, zeal for His glory, and the salvation of souls must be the only motives for choosing that state.

Vocation to the priesthood is most honorable; it is an inconceivable divine blessing; but it should not be aspired to from worldly motives. "Neither doth any man take the honor to himself, but he that is called by God, as Aaron was" (*Heb. iv. 4*), says St. Paul. This vocation exists whenever the following conditions are all verified: (1) The aspirant must desire this state for supernatural motives. (2) He must be judged fit for it by his spiritual director. (3) He must be accepted by the bishop or a Religious superior. (4) He must habitually lead a chaste life. (5) He must be free from such natural obligations as have a prior claim on his time and labor, such as the duty of supporting parents that could not be properly provided for if he entered the sacred ministry. But if they are not in great need of his support, he does not need their permission to devote himself to the service of God.

Parents should not presume to usurp God's rights over their children's service, but rather consider themselves highly honored if the Lord deigns to invite one of their sons to so sublime a dignity.

OBJECTIONS

1. *Priests exaggerate the dignity and responsibility of their office.*

Of priests Christ said, speaking to His apostles: "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me." (*Luke x. 16.*) The holy Fathers frequently mention the dignity of the priesthood. St. Augustine writes:

"The priest's dignity surpasses that of emperors and kings; even that of the angels." St. Bernard says: "To the priests is given a power which even the angels do not possess." And St. Alphonsus adds: "No angel can, by his word, change bread into the body of Christ; all angels together can not absolve from a single sin: the priest can." Great as the priest's dignity is also his responsibility. Of it St. Paul writes: "For they watch as being to render an account of your souls, that they may do this with joy, and not with grief." (*Heb. xiii. 17.*) St. Bernard says: "They that have to render an account for many souls have great and many responsibilities." St. Chrysostom on the day of his ordination to the priesthood reminded the faithful: "I am now greatly in need of your prayers, that I may not be condemned on the day of judgment."

2. Some priests, despite their great dignity, lead scandalous lives.

The dignity of the priesthood is forfeited by nothing, not even by a scandalous life; therefore it always deserves reverence. St. Francis of Assisi was wont to say of priests: "I will not regard their faults, but will acknowledge them the representatives of God." God permits priests to commit faults, to teach them greater compassion for the erring and ignorant. But to ascribe the faults of one priest to all of them is certainly the grossest injustice. Moreover, the charges against the priesthood are, in a great measure, untrue.

The laws relative to the education and deportment of priests are very strict, and their repeated violation is punished with suspension from office. Again, it is a well-known fact that most of the accusations against priests originate with people who are themselves guilty of what they accuse others of.

3. *Let the priests remain in the church and sacristy, where they belong: but they intrude and mix up with temporal affairs, especially with school matters.*

By "temporal affairs" our adversaries usually mean socialism, church policy, the school question, and divorce legislation. All these matters relate both to the spiritual and temporal welfare of mankind: therefore it is the priest's paramount duty to give them his attention. Concerning the school question in particular the position and view of the Church is this: The education of children belongs first of all to the parents. Therefore they have a right to the school, which takes their place in the matter of education. Education, however, is also, and principally, concerned with the spiritual welfare of the children, and to procure this is the duty of the Church. She was established and is appointed to lead them to eternal salvation. Hence the child's education must, above all, be a religious one. Only then will children become good citizens of the state. And for this reason, because the child's education must be a religious one, it is the right and the duty of the

Church to watch and take care that the family and the school are imbued with the religious spirit, and, moreover, with the *Catholic* religious spirit. The same is the case as regards the social and political questions relating to religious matters. Were it, then, not a grievous violation of duty if the priest would not counteract the evil influence which socialists, anarchists, and other revolutionists try to exert on the faithful?

Examples

REVERENCE FOR PRIESTS

St. Anthony the Hermit had such veneration and respect for priests that it was a saying of his that if he should meet an angel and a priest together he would honor the priest in preference to the angel. If he met one he fell on his knees, and would not rise till he had received his blessing.

Among the many beautiful lessons which St. Francis of Assisi gave his disciples was also this one: "I will hold priests in awe, and love and honor them as my masters. I will not regard their faults, because I see in them the Son of God, whom they alone consecrate and minister to the faithful, and because they are my masters."

Emperor Constantine the Great held the bishops and priests in such respect and veneration that he would not sit down during the Council of Nice until after they all had been seated, and even then sat down only with their permission and on a seat below them all.

Emperor Basil often and earnestly exhorted his son Leo to have great reverence for priests on account of their sublime dignity. He was wont to say: "The reverence you show to priests is shown to God Himself. For as *we* desire that people should honor and esteem our ministers for our sake, thus God desires that we should honor and esteem *His* ministers for His sake."

ST. MARTIN AND ST. AMBROSE

While the holy bishop, St. Martin, was one day dining with the Emperor Maximus, the latter, out of respect for his saintly guest, passed him the royal goblet untasted; and the good bishop, to assert the dignity of his office, not only accepted the honor himself, but handed the cup to an humble priest, his secretary, as next in order of precedence.

St. Ambrose, when the emperor would have seated himself in the sanctuary, exclaimed: "Theodosius, go forth and take thy place among the laity, for though thy ermine makes thee an emperor, it does not make thee a priest."

CHAPTER IX

The Sacrament of Matrimony

THE greater part of mankind is called by God to serve Him in the married state. He instituted matrimony in paradise, and bestowed His special blessing on it. Holy Scripture relates that after creating Adam and Eve "God blessed them, saying: Increase and multiply, and fill the earth." (*Gen. i. 28.*) By the law of Moses the Almighty announced more explicitly the dignity and obligations of Matrimony. It was still more sanctified by our divine Redeemer, who in the New Law raised Matrimony from a natural and civil contract to the dignity of a sacrament.

Matrimony is the sacrament by which a Christian man and a Christian woman are united in lawful marriage. St. Paul calls it a representation of that sacred union which Jesus Christ formed with His spouse, the Church. He says: "This is a great sacrament: but I speak in Christ and in the Church." (*Eph. v. 32.*)

The married state, then, being so holy and instituted for such a great and hallowed purpose, has sublime graces annexed to it when the Sacrament of Matrimony is received worthily. It makes the married couple happy in this world and in the world to come. Therefore they who enter it ought to proceed with the greatest pru-



SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

dence and prepare themselves with the greatest care, so as to receive from God the full benefit of the graces annexed to this sacrament.

1. They ought to contract Matrimony with the intention of promoting the honor and glory of God and the salvation of their souls.

2. They ought to choose for consort a person of their own Faith. Experience proves that a want of union in the Faith between husband and wife is frequently followed by serious consequences, both to themselves and to their offspring. Without having obtained dispensation, a Catholic can not lawfully marry a non-Catholic; and if, for valid reasons, such a marriage is permitted, the Catholic party can not agree to have the children born of this union brought up in any other than the Catholic Faith, and the non-Catholic party must, beforehand, solemnly promise, first, that no obstacles whatsoever shall be placed in the way of the Catholic party as regards religious observances, and secondly, that all the children born to them be baptized and brought up in the Catholic Church.

3. The Sacrament of Matrimony must be received in the state of grace. Therefore Catholics are required to purify their conscience by a good confession before receiving it, and should receive Holy Communion to draw the blessing of God on their new state of life.

4. The Church wishes marriages to be solemnized with a Nuptial Mass. Hence a decree of

Third Plenary Council of Baltimore says: "Let those who have the care of souls take every occasion to exhort the faithful to the keeping of that pious custom of the Church whereby marriages are celebrated not in the night-time, but during Mass, and accompanied by the nuptial blessing. . . . This custom is held to be not merely a commendable, but quite a necessary one now in the present days, when the foes of religion are leaving nothing untried in their efforts to deprive, if possible, holy Matrimony of all sanctity and of all likeness to a sacrament, and to degrade it to the level of a mere civil contract." (*Decrees*, No. 125.) In their pastoral letter to the faithful the Fathers of the same Council say: "Let them enter marriage only through worthy and holy motives, with the blessings of religion, especially with the blessing of the Nuptial Mass."

Persons contemplating marriage ought to reflect seriously on the duties and obligations they are about to undertake. St. Paul, strongly emphasizing these duties by the example of Christ and His Church, says: "Let women be subject to their husbands, as to the Lord: because the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the Church: He is the saviour of His body. Therefore as the Church is subject to Christ, so also let the wives be subject to their husbands in all things. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church and delivered Himself up for it. . . . So also ought men love their wives

as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever hated his own flesh: but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as also Christ doth the Church. . . . For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and there shall be two in one flesh. This is a great sacrament: but I speak in Christ and in the Church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular love his wife as himself: and let the wife fear her husband." (*Eph.* v. 22-33.)

Matrimony was always believed in the Church to be a sacrament. This is attested and taught by the holy Fathers and the Councils. St. Ireneus, St. Cyril, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine and many others among the early Fathers teach that it is one of the seven sacraments. The Council of Florence, 1438, declares that Matrimony is the seventh sacrament, and that it confers grace on those who receive it worthily. It moreover declares him *anathema* who should maintain that it is not truly and properly one of the seven sacraments of the New Law instituted by Christ.

The Sacrament of Matrimony confers on the husband and wife who receive it worthily the grace to love each other, to bear each other's frailties and faults, to live in harmony and peace, to be faithful to each other, and to support with Christian fortitude the trials and difficulties of the married state. It enables them to bring up their children in the love and fear of God by training them to religion and piety.

From the earliest ages the Church, zealously guarding the sanctity of Matrimony, has decreed that certain conditions in which the contracting parties exist impede or render void marriage. These impediments are of two kinds: First, *annulling* impediments, or such as make, without special dispensation, a marriage null and void from the beginning; secondly, *prohibitive* impediments, which, without dispensation, render a marriage illegal and sinful, though not invalid.

The *annulling impediments* are:

1. *Consanguinity*, which forbids marriage between third cousins or any nearer degree of kindred.

2. *Affinity* is relationship by marriage. It is forbidden to marry the third cousin or any nearer blood relation of one's former wife or husband. The same is true of a person, and the blood relations of any one, with whom that person has had unlawful intercourse; but in this case the impediment extends only to the second degree—first cousins. *Spiritual affinity* is a species of relationship contracted by means of the Sacrament of Baptism or Confirmation. For this reason parents can not marry the sponsors of their child or any person who baptized it; nor can sponsors marry their god-children. Thus, if any one baptizes the child of another, even in case of necessity, he can not marry either the child or its parents.

3. *Public honesty* is an impediment which forbids to marry a parent, a child, or brother or sister of the person to whom one has been validly engaged by a promise of marriage. Also, if one has contracted an invalid marriage, or a valid marriage which was never consummated, it is forbidden in such case to marry the blood relations of the other party as far as the fourth degree; that is, a third cousin or any nearer blood relation.

4. *Crime* is also an impediment. Persons who are guilty of adultery with a mutual promise of marriage in case the innocent party should die are incapable of contracting marriage together. Two persons who were guilty of the homicide of one of the married parties, and of adultery, with a view to marriage, can not marry one another. It is with great reason that persons who are guilty of these crimes should be rendered incapable of ever contracting marriage together, as such incapacity prevents numbers of crimes which otherwise might follow.

5. *Difference of religion* is an impediment between a baptized person and one who was never baptized.

6. *Vows* is an impediment which makes marriage impossible to all who made solemn vows in a Religious Order; nor can any person marry who is in Holy Orders, from subdeaconship up.

7. *Clandestinity*. Every marriage where both parties, or one of them, is a Catholic, is null and

void if not contracted in conformity with the prescriptions of the law of Pope Pius X, which went into effect April 19, 1908.

8. *The bond of a previous marriage* is an impediment which death alone can remove. The Catholic Church teaches that by the institution and ordinance of the Almighty marriage is indissoluble. No court, no judge, no legislature, no power on earth can break the bond which unites husband and wife. "What, therefore, God hath joined, let no man put asunder." (*Matt. xix. 6.*) For certain just causes, especially for adultery, they may live separately, but they are still married, and can not marry again as long as one of the parties lives. No legal divorce, no guilt, no desertion can ever sever the marriage tie. Nothing but the certain knowledge of the death of one party can make it lawful for the other to marry again.

Prohibitory impediments are those which do not annul the marriage, nor hinder it from being a true and valid marriage, but make it sinful in those who contract marriage with these impediments.

The chief impediments of this kind are:

1. A *simple vow* to preserve chastity, or to become a priest, or to join a Religious Order.
2. A *previous valid engagement to marry* any person.
3. Impediments arising from the *prohibition of the Church*, such as (1) the *solemnization* of

marriage during Advent or Lent, that is, to marry during these seasons with external pomp and festivity. (2) *Mixed marriages*, the union of a Catholic with a baptized person who is not a Catholic. These marriages are unlawful and are prohibited in the strongest terms by the canons of the Church, by a great many Councils, and by the sovereign Pontiffs; for they have often been the fruitful source of public scandal and private misery. Only for grave reasons does the Church grant dispensation for a mixed marriage, and then prescribes certain conditions to be observed.

4. *The non-consent of parents*, when their consent is withheld for good and just reasons.

In addition to these there are a few other impediments, which are not generally likely to occur. With regard to all matters concerning marriage it is very important to consult the pastor before making definite arrangements.

PUBLICATION OF THE BANNS.—In order to place a check on clandestine marriages, to discover any impediments which may exist, to prevent deceptions and surprises, to afford parents and others interested an opportunity to interfere, if needful, and in order to procure the prayers of the faithful that God may give light, grace, and prosperity to the contracting parties, the Council of Trent has decreed “that the promise of marriage be published on three successive Sundays or holy days at the principal Mass by the parish priest of the parties.” (*Sess. xxiv.*) This is a

very important law and imposes very serious obligations. Bishops can, and for good and sufficient reasons do, grant a dispensation from this law. Catholics should remember that it is sinful not to have the banns published in the regular form, unless such dispensation is procured. There can, moreover, be no doubt that if any one knows of any impediment in the way of a proposed marriage, such a person is in duty bound to reveal it.

THE MARRIAGE LAW OF POPE PIUS X.—By the law which went into effect on April 19, 1908, the Supreme Pontiff decreed that among Christians there is no distinction between the marriage *contract* and the *Sacrament* of Matrimony, and declared that the Church alone can impose the conditions under which Christians can or can not receive this sacrament. By this law the Church declares that the state can no more administer the Sacrament of Matrimony than it can administer any of the other sacraments. All the state can do is: it may impose conditions for civil recognition of Matrimony, and may legislate on whatever concerns the purely civil effects of a marriage.

This law decrees for the universal Church a certain form absolutely necessary, which will give every marriage publicity. It declares that this form is essential for Catholics among themselves, and for Catholics who marry non-Catholics, whether the latter are baptized or not. It decrees every other form, whether approved by

the state or by any heretical or schismatical sect, to be invalid. It further decrees that every such form is ineffective, and as useless as if no form whatever were observed. By Catholics are meant every one who has been received into the Catholic Church. By this law the Church, moreover, declares that she has the God-given power to bind refractory subjects and all who have been validly baptized in any form or expression of Christianity. It decrees that all fallen-away Catholics, irrespective of time, condition or place, can not receive the Sacrament of Matrimony, and consequently can not enter into any marriage contract, unless the form and ritual prescribed by the Church be observed. It further declares and decrees that the Church does not require that this form and ritual be observed by those who have never been baptized in or received into the Catholic Church. It declares, further, that while its provisions extend to the entire world, the Church is willing to make exceptions if, owing to frail human nature and the peculiar circumstances in Protestant countries, it can be shown that such exceptions will work for the greater good of souls, for a more expeditious reconciliation of penitents, and for public peace and tranquillity.

The following is a synopsis of this marriage law:

I. ENGAGEMENTS

1. Since Easter, April 19, 1908, every matrimonial engagement must be in writing, although

there is no necessity or obligation to enter into formal engagement before marriage.

2. In the eyes of the Church private betrothal, since the promulgation of the new law, between Catholic parties or between fallen-away Catholics begets no matrimonial obligation whatever, because the Church decrees that every prenuptial contract is void unless it is written and duly attested.

3. Parties wishing to become engaged must sign the prenuptial contract and have the bishop or their pastor witness it. In the absence of the bishop or duly authorized priest, two witnesses must sign the engagement. If one or both of those to be engaged can not write, this should be noted, and three lay witnesses must sign the engagement in the absence of the bishop or parish priest.

4. These engagements should be encouraged. If made some months before marriage they will help to stop hasty alliances, which are the cause of so many unhappy marriages among Catholics.

5. This written contract would furnish good grounds in our civil courts for breach of promise suit. The State will recognize this prenuptial contract as it will recognize any other contract legally made by individuals.

6. Protestants, and all who have never been baptized in the Catholic Faith, are not subjects of this law; hence their private contracts bind: for the simple reason that the Church has not

made these conditions under which they must enter into an engagement.

7. All fallen-away Catholics, whether they have become Protestants or infidels, are bound by the law. The Church, like the State, can bind refractory subjects.

II. MARRIAGES

1. Every bishop, or vicar-general, or administrator of a diocese can validly marry in his own diocese any parties, irrespective of the country or place whence they come. The bishop can delegate any priest to do the same.

2. Bishops or priests may not assist at marriages until they have assumed office.

3. There is no marriage at all if the priest be *compelled* to witness it. There is no marriage if the priest does not ask and receive the consent of the parties.

4. The authority which the bishop has in his diocese the priest has in his parish.

5. The bishop outside his diocese, and the pastor outside the limits of his parish, can not validly marry their own or other subjects without due authorization.

6. Marriage before a priest who is suspended or excommunicated by name will be no marriage at all.

7. Marriage of all Catholics (both parties Catholics) before a Protestant minister or a civil magistrate will be no marriage at all.

8. Marriage of a Catholic to a non-baptized person is never a real marriage unless the Church grants a dispensation. Such a marriage before a minister or a justice of the peace is no marriage.

9. Marriage of all fallen-away Catholics (who have become Protestants or infidels) before a minister or civil magistrate will be no marriage at all.

10. Marriage of a Catholic to a Protestant (one who was never baptized in the Catholic Church) before a minister or civil magistrate is no marriage at all.

11. Marriage of a Protestant to a Protestant (provided they were never baptized in the Catholic Church) is valid.

12. Marriage of a Protestant (baptized) to a non-baptized party is no marriage.

13. Marriage of a non-baptized man to a non-baptized woman is valid as a life contract. Such parties, however, do not receive the Sacrament of Matrimony.

14. There is no marriage at all unless there be *two* witnesses—one witness with the priest will not suffice.

15. Bishops or priests should not witness marriages until they are certain that the parties to be married are free to enter the matrimonial state: hence, as far as possible, dispensation from the publication of banns should not be sought.

16. For the lawful celebration of a marriage one or the other of the contracting parties should

have a domicile or live for a month in the parish where they are to be married. This condition, however, is not essential for the validity of a marriage.

17. Marriages of persons without a fixed abode should be referred to the bishop before the ceremony takes place.

18. Marriage should take place in the parish church of the bride, unless there be good reason to go to the pastor of the groom.

19. To enable the priest to make due registration of marriages, the contracting parties must procure their baptismal certificate, if they are married in a church where they were not baptized.

20. Marriage entered into when there is danger of death can be witnessed by any priest with two witnesses, provided there is not time to reach the bishop, parish priest or priest appointed by either of these.

21. If for an entire month parties can not secure a bishop, parish priest, or any priest appointed by either of these, they may, in presence of two witnesses (there is no marriage if there be not two witnesses), declare their consent to marry. They are then in the eyes of the Church and before God married. As soon as possible after such a marriage they should send their names to the parish priest for registration, and do whatever is required to have their marriage legally recognized by the state.

NOTE.—This marriage law does not make pro-

vision for the marriage of people in the United States who speak a foreign language. But a decree of April 27, 1897, declares: That church in the United States in which a foreign language is used may be considered as the parish church of the people speaking that language, but only for them. Catholics, not natives of America, but knowing the English tongue, and their children, have the right to become members of the church in which the English tongue is in use. Logically, then, the latter have the right to be married in the church to which they territorially belong.

DUTIES OF MARRIED PEOPLE.—Married people assume the special duties of their state of life. Their first duty is mutual *love* and *affection*. Without it there is no union whatever possible, much less that intimate union which the marriage bond demands. Without a sincere love it is impossible for them to continue long in peace and harmony, and without peace and concord they can not expect to be happy. For though worldly prosperity should abound with them, discord embitters their whole life; but with peace and harmony they will be happy even amid afflictions and trials. Mutual love is a *natural* duty of married people; but it is also a *religious* duty, for they are called to represent the union existing between Christ and His Church.

The second duty of married persons is that of mutual *conjugal fidelity*. It must be observed under all circumstances until death. Not only the

actual infidelity by external acts, but even the voluntary thought and desire, the licentious look at another person, is strictly prohibited by God's commandment. The grace to preserve this fidelity is imparted to married persons by the Sacrament of Matrimony. Adultery is in all respects an awful crime. It comprises all the malice of fornication; it is a gross injury to the other married party; it is a crime against society, an insult to the family and destructive of its happiness. Above all it is an enormous offense against God, because it tears asunder the bond which He Himself joined. Adultery leads to many other crimes, even to homicide. In many instances it is manifestly punished by God even in this life. But the adulterer's greatest punishment, if he wantonly continues in sin and dies without true repentance, is damnation to the eternal torments of hell.

The third duty of married persons is *mutual support*. The trials, difficulties, and troubles of the married state are various and great. Married persons must bear them in mutual charity, and assist each other in sustaining their burdens. Thereby they lighten them and render them meritorious before God.

Mutual sanctification is another duty of married persons. They should live in their state in such a manner that they may have a greater assurance of salvation than if they had remained single. They ought to encourage each other in

observing God's commandments and in the fulfilment of all their duties, and thus aid each other in gaining heaven. They must know their rights and duties, and exercise them in such a manner that they do not impede God's grace, but merit it.

Besides these general duties, both the husband and the wife have special ones. Above all, the husband must be kind and indulgent to his wife, and consider her not as his servant, but as his helpmate. He must provide for the temporal and spiritual welfare of his family, as St. Paul says: "If any man have not care of his own, and especially of those of his house, he hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an infidel." (1 *Tim.* v. 8.) The wife, too, has special duties. She must honor her husband as her head, as St. Paul writes: "The husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the Church." (*Eph.* v. 23.) She must obey him: "Therefore as the Church is subject to Christ, so also let the wives be to their husbands in all things." (*Eph.* v. 24.) Only if the husband should demand of her anything sinful, she must refuse it kindly but firmly. In her demeanor she must be gentle, affable, and pleasant, and try to conserve the peace of the family. She must, moreover, take diligent care of the home: there is her place, and there will she merit and receive God's blessing.

Besides their duties as husband and wife, married people, if their union was blessed with children, have also duties as *parents*. As such, their

most important duty is the *Christian education* of their children. Children are precious pledges entrusted by God to them, and He will reclaim them from their hands on the day of judgment. Therefore parents must be careful that neither they nor any other member of their household do anything by which their children might be caused to commit sin. They must instruct them in their religion and teach them the practice of virtue, thus to lead them to the attainment of their life's purpose, the service of God and eternal salvation. A great aid in accomplishing this they will find in the *Catholic school*.

In the work of Catholic education the parents' duty is twofold, positive and negative. Something is commanded and something is forbidden. Parents are bound on the one hand to place and keep their children under good moral and religious influence, and on the other not to wilfully subject them to what is irreligious or immoral. Besides drawing out and strengthening the powers of their minds, and furnishing them with a stock of useful information, as a means of success in life, they must also give them positive Catholic instruction and positive Catholic training in Christian piety and virtue. They are forbidden to expose them in any way to a proximate danger to their faith and morals. Therefore, where there is a Catholic school, parents are bound to send their children to it and to encourage and patronize it in every way they can; and

where there is none, parents must try, with the aid of their pastor, to shield their children from danger and to provide for their spiritual wants by extra watchfulness and instruction. Let them remember that without religious instruction by religious teaching and religious training their duty will not be done, no matter what amount of other schooling they may provide for their children.

The graces necessary for the fulfilment of these great duties of married persons are conferred on them in the Sacrament of Matrimony. And yet there are so many *unhappy marriages*! Why? Because in many cases the sacramental grace remains ineffective. This may arise from two causes, either at the time of contracting marriage or later. The Sacrament of Matrimony must be received in the state of grace. If the contracting parties knowingly receive it in the state of mortal sin, they commit the horrible crime of sacrilege. Is it surprising, then, if God's blessing is withheld from them? True, such a marriage is valid if it was not rendered null and void by some impediment; but the saving grace of the sacrament lies dormant, like dead, in them. What is to be done in such a case to revive the sacramental grace? By a good confession, true contrition, and absolution sanctifying grace is not only restored to such persons, but at the same time the special grace of the Sacrament of Matrimony becomes effective in their souls.

The sacramental grace of Matrimony is also rendered ineffective by mortal sin committed after its worthy reception, and remains inefficient until restored by a true conversion.

Sin, then, is, in a word, the cause of so many unhappy marriages.

OBJECTIONS

1. *Marriage is merely a civil contract by which the parties agree to live together.*

Marriage is not merely a contract; for the marriage contract of baptized persons and the Sacrament of Matrimony are inseparable. (*Pius IX*, 1852.) A marriage contract that is invalid can not be a sacrament. Pope Pius IX declares every connection between man and woman that is not a sacrament, even if sanctioned by civil law, as an abominable and execrable concubinage. Also Pope Leo XIII, April 21, 1878. The state can not legislate concerning the bond of Matrimony, nor interfere with the duties essentially involved in it, for the rights and the duties of the married state are not derived from the civil power.

2. *The rigid attitude of the Catholic Church with regard to divorce is superannuated.*

The Church can not abrogate a divine law. In the Old Testament the Jews were permitted to dismiss their wives for certain reasons; they were also allowed a plurality of wives. But Christ withdrew this permission, saying: "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder."

(*Matt. xix. 6.*) Hence the Popes never permitted a second marriage during the lifetime of one of the parties to one of the first. They could not do otherwise, for they can not change God's law.

For valid reasons, however, married persons may separate. But if such a separation is to be effected by legal divorce, Catholics must first obtain the permission of their diocesan bishop. Even in this case the divorced parties can not contract a new marriage as long as one of the parties to the former one lives.

3. *Mixed marriages sometimes turn out very well.*

Temporal prosperity and happiness are not in question; what is to be considered is salvation. Salvation can be attained only in the true religion. If the Catholic party to a mixed marriage is not firmly grounded in the Faith, he or she soon becomes lukewarm in it and is exposed to the danger of losing it altogether. If both parties firmly adhere to their respective religious denomination, the cause of quarrels, ridicule, etc., is always at hand. For instance, the non-Catholic husband's views concerning many Catholic doctrines and practices are the very opposite of his wife's; he ridicules or forbids her going to church, fasting, etc. The education of the children, too, often causes disputes and quarrels. The Catholic party can not yield without apostatizing from the Faith which he or she regards as the only true one, but must insist on the children's Catholic baptism

and training. How often is the Catholic party made supremely unhappy for life because of the non-fulfilment of the promise of rearing the children in the Catholic Faith! Again, in mixed marriages the rights of the parties are unequal: for in the case of a divorce the non-Catholic party may remarry, but the Catholic can not do so during the other party's lifetime. Pope Leo XIII says on this subject: "In mixed marriages there is great danger of denying the difference between truth and error, and of holding all religions for equally right." True happiness is impossible under such circumstances.

4. *Dispensations are only a pretense for getting the people's money.*

The investigation of the reasons alleged for granting dispensations, and the issuing of the requisite documents, require the employment of a number of officials in both the Papal and episcopal courts. Like other mortals, they must live, and depend on a salary to make their living, like every other notary or clerk who issues or attests documents. For these documents the person asking a dispensation is required to pay a certain fee, if not excused on account of poverty. Is there any catch-penny device in this practice?

Examples

ST. MONICA

St. Monica, mother of the great St. Augustine, was married to one Patricius, a man of honor

and probity, but a pagan. She obeyed and served him as her master, and labored to make him a Christian, though the chief argument she used was the sanctity of her conduct, enforced by an affectionate, obliging behavior, by which she commanded his love, respect, and esteem. But he was hasty and choleric, and often abused her. Monica never thwarted him by the least action or word while she saw him in anger; but when the fit was over and he was calm she mildly gave him her reasons and an account of her actions. When she saw other wives bearing the marks of their husband's anger on their disfigured faces, and heard them blaming their roughness of temper or debaucheries, she would remark: "Lay the blame rather on yourselves and your unbridled tongues." The example of her patience and virtue finally convinced Patricius of the truth and sanctity of the Christian religion, which he accordingly embraced, giving proof of the sincerity of his conversion by a virtuous life.

A SINCERE PENITENT

Fabiola, a noble and wealthy Roman lady, had separated from her licentious and adulterous husband and contracted a second marriage, though her husband still lived, defying the law of the Church, for she was a Christian. After a few happy years her second husband died. His death brought her to realize the enormity of her sin, and she resolved to make her peace with God.

During Lent, A.D. 390, she knelt with the public penitents in front of the Lateran basilica, to become worthy of absolution. But even this public demonstration of repentance did not satisfy her penitential spirit. On the day following her restoration to the communion of the Church she left the world and founded the first hospital in Rome, where she lived solely for God, the sick and the poor. The noble scion of the Fabians became the handmaid of the poor of Christ, and persevered in their service till death.

GOOD COUNSEL

A woman went to a saint and complained bitterly of her husband. The saint listened attentively to her without making any remark. At last she asked him what he thought she had better do. He replied: "Go home and be a better wife to your husband, then you will find he will be a better husband to you."

CHAPTER X

The Sacramentals, and Prayer

BESIDES the sacraments instituted by Christ, there are other visible signs instituted by the Church, which, although they do not confer or increase sanctifying grace in the soul like the sacraments, yet promote the spiritual and temporal welfare of the faithful. They are called *sacramentals*.

A sacramental, therefore, is anything set apart or blessed by the Church to inspire good thoughts and to increase devotion and thereby to impart actual graces and other favors of soul and body. They do not produce grace by their own efficacy, but by the devout acts of those who use them, and these acts are made specially efficacious by the prayers of the Church. The difference, then, between the sacraments and the sacramentals is this: the sacraments were instituted by Christ and the sacramentals were instituted by the Church; the sacraments confer grace of themselves on those rightly disposed and the sacramentals excite in us pious dispositions, by which we may obtain grace.

Among the sacramentals introduced by the Church are: the sign of the cross, the prayers and objects used at divine service, and things set apart and sanctified by a special blessing, such as



SAINT VINCENT OF PAUL

"Whoever shall receive one such child as this in My name, receiveth Me."

holy water, blessed oil, salt, candles, ashes, palms, etc. In order to be reckoned among the sacramentals in the proper sense of the word, the blessing of the object must relate to man's benefit and welfare; and the blessing must be given in the name and by authority of the Church. Therefore not all acts or ceremonies relating to religion are sacramentals; an act or object may have a religious signification or relation without having received a blessing whereby it becomes a sacramental.

To obtain the salutary effects of the sacramentals we must observe the following rules:

1. We must use them with the proper faith; that is, not ascribe to them too great or too little effect. We ascribe too great an effect to them if we attribute to them a virtue they can not have; for instance, if we believe that by having a certain blessed object about us we shall not die in the state of mortal sin, or suddenly, etc. We ascribe too little effect to them if we deny that they are invested with a special power through the prayer and blessing of the Church. In the first case, by believing too much of the sacramentals, we become guilty of *superstition*; in the latter case we are wanting in faith, for the Church teaches that her prayers and blessings have a special effect for the benefit of the faithful.

2. In using the sacramentals we must be *submissive to the will of God*. We must not believe that the effect of the Church's blessing is bound

to become apparent in every instance. The sacramentals do not operate like the sacraments, by their own efficacy; they are supplementary, and their effect depends on our worthiness or on our needs. In matters relating to our temporal welfare we can never be sure whether God will give us that for which we pray, because it might not be for our spiritual good. So the condition, "if it be the will of God," must always accompany our prayer and our use of the sacramentals.

3. We must use the blessed object in the right manner. Above all, we must not entertain a false confidence as to the surety of our salvation because we make use of blessed objects. They will *help* us to attain heaven, but they can not *open* it to us. Only faith, good works and the grace of God conferred on us by the sacraments can do this.

Because blessed objects are dedicated to God and bear a supernatural character, they must be treated with reverence, and may never be used for improper purposes.

The sacramentals receive their efficacy through the prayer of the Church, asking God to grant us certain favors. But we, too, must pray, for prayer is the duty of every human being.

Prayer is the elevation of the soul to God. Nothing is more necessary and of greater benefit to man, excepting always, of course, the worthy reception of the sacraments. By prayer we disclose our wants and display our miseries before

the throne of God. It is a channel through which blessings flow from above; it is the shield and armor of the Christian, and his strong defense against the devil. St. Augustine calls it the key of heaven that unlocks the treasures of God and gives man free access to the riches of divine bounty. There is no favor that may not be obtained by prayer. May not our perdition, then, be laid at our own door, if we neglect having recourse to God in all our needs, both spiritual and temporal? Our manifold necessities, the depravity and infirmities of our nature, the various dangers to which we are constantly exposed, our inability to do the least good of ourselves, the frequent temptations of the devil, the world and the flesh: all these are convincing proofs of the indispensable obligation and necessity of prayer.

Prayer is founded on faith, hope and charity, the three theological virtues, and implies the most perfect acts of religion. The idea of prayer must not be confined to *petition* alone, as some people seem to imagine, who appear in the divine presence only with hands uplifted to receive favors. There are, besides, four other kinds of prayer: *Adoration, praise, thanksgiving, and offering.*

The duty of prayer is repeatedly inculcated in Holy Scripture. We read of Christ: "He spoke also a parable to them, that we ought always to pray, and not to faint." (*Luke xviii. 1.*) The same idea is expressed in His words: "Watch ye, therefore, praying at all times, that you may be

accounted worthy to escape all these things that are to come, and to stand before the Son of man." (*Luke* xxi. 37.) In their epistles the apostles often exhort to prayer. St. Paul writes: "Pray without ceasing." (*Thess.* v. 17.) And again: "By all prayer and supplication, praying at all times in the spirit: and in the same watching with all instance and supplication." (*Eph.* vi. 18.) St. James, too, writes: "Is any of you sad? Let him pray. Is he cheerful in mind? Let him sing." (*James* v. 13.) And: "Pray one for another, that you may be saved." (*James* v. 16.)

What Christ and the apostles taught they practised and inculcated by their example. Of Our Lord we read in the gospels that He often retired to the solitude to pray, and when the time was at hand for Him to suffer, He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemani to His heavenly Father. Of the apostles we read that they often promised to pray for the faithful, and asked their prayers.

There are, however, certain conditions to be observed if our prayer is to please God. "If we are desirous that God should hear our prayers," says St. Gregory, "we must hear *Him* in His commandments." For: "Not every one that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doth the will of my Father who is in heaven, he shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." (*Matt.* vii. 21.) Moreover, to pray well we should be in the state of grace; for the

“prayer of a just man availeth much.” (*James* v. 16.) However, if one should be so unhappy as to be in mortal sin, he is not therefore to neglect prayer, since the more guilty he is, the more he stands in need of graces, and the more diligent he should be in praying for true conversion and imploring the mercy of God. Prayer, with a sincere purpose of amendment, will help him, and the example of the publican and the prodigal son should be his encouragement, as they show how ready the Lord is to hear the prayer of the greatest sinners when they return to Him in sincere contrition.

The following qualities must accompany prayer if we desire to please God thereby:

Attention. It is the spirit and soul of prayer, and if it be wanting, prayer is defective in its very substance, which is an expression of the heart and soul in words addressed to God. If we ourselves do not pay attention to what we say, how can we expect God to do so? Let the lips and tongue, therefore, be ever so busily employed, unless our heart and thoughts be fixed on God it is prayer only in outward appearance and not in reality. It is prayer like that of the Pharisees, of whom Christ complains: “This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.” (*Matt.* xv. 8.) Is it not dishonoring God to address His Divine Majesty with such disrespect, such indifference, and to pretend to manifest to Him the desires of the heart, when that heart is

in no way concerned, nor has any sincere and earnest desire of obtaining what the words express, but is wandering upon worldly objects and occupied with wilful distractions? It is therefore necessary to banish all foreign thoughts and to keep a close guard on our mind and heart when we pray. We should prepare our soul for appearing in the divine presence with due respect, according to the admonition of the Holy Ghost: "Before prayer prepare thy soul, and be not as a man that tempteth God." (*Ecclus.* xviii. 23.) This preparation consists in calling to mind the presence of God, in keeping a lively sense of it during the time of prayer, and in directing our intention to a good purpose. True devotion seeks only to please God, and whilst it edifies by all marks of a solid piety in places of public worship, it avoids all ostentation, vanity, singularity, and pharisaical affectation.

Humility is another condition of good prayer. The efficacy of humble prayer appears strikingly in the publican: "And the publican, standing afar off, would not so much as lift up his eyes toward heaven, but struck his breast, saying: O God, be merciful to me, a sinner" (*Luke* xviii. 13), and in the Chanaanean woman, who, being told by our blessed Saviour: "It is not good to take the bread of the children, and to cast it to the dogs," was so far from being discouraged at this humiliating rejection that she persisted in her prayer, and modestly replied: "The whelps eat also of the

crumbs that fall from the table of their masters." (*Matt.* xv. 27.) By this humble self-abasement she moved the tender compassion of Our Lord to grant her petition. If we, therefore, wish to render our prayer acceptable to God and efficacious to ourselves we must beware of following the example of the proud Pharisee, who, confiding in his own justice, and depending on his own merits, presumptuously imagined that he was worthy that his prayer should be heard. Far from being carried away by such presumptuous and haughty notions, we should renounce all self-confidence and throw ourselves entirely on the mercy and goodness of God and His promises. We should represent all our wants and necessities to Him like poor, indigent suppliants earnestly craving a charitable alms. We should be deeply penetrated with a sense of our own unworthiness not only to obtain the mercy we implore, but even to lift up our eyes to God's infinite majesty.

The next condition that must accompany our prayer is a lively, unshaken *confidence* or firm faith and trust in God's boundless power, goodness and mercy. This condition is so necessary that St. Augustine says: "If faith be wanting, prayer is lost." A soul full of holy confidence is like a sacred vessel into which the divine mercy pours the treasures of its grace, and the greater the confidence is, the greater also are the heavenly favors and blessings that prayer draws into such

a soul. Hence St. James advises us to "ask in faith, nothing wavering." (*James* i. 6.)

Another condition of prayer is to present our petitions *in the name of Jesus Christ*, who has assured us that "if you ask the Father anything in my name, He will give it you." (*John* xvi. 23.) He is the Mediator of our redemption; He is our Advocate and High Priest, and "there is no other name under heaven given to men whereby we must be saved." (*Acts* iv. 12.) He has purchased for us the graces which we pray for, and it is through Him that we are to "go with confidence to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace in seasonable aid." (*Heb.* iv. 16.) To pray for things which we erroneously imagine would be a means to promote our happiness, but which God foresees would prove an obstacle to our salvation and would become the occasion of eternal ruin and loss of our souls if our desires were gratified in the way we ask, is not to pray in the name of Jesus; consequently we are not to imagine that God breaks His word if He refuses to grant such requests. Therefore temporal blessings, such as health, wealth, and other goods of fortune, which are liable to be abused, should not be prayed for otherwise than on condition that they would be conducive to God's honor and expedient for the salvation of our souls.

Resignation to God's will is a most necessary condition of prayer; so much so that without it

prayer would be of no avail. We must be perfectly resigned to the directions of God's providence. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts: nor your ways my ways, saith the Lord." (*Is.* lv. 8.) It is enough for us to know that He will give us what He in His infinite wisdom intended for our greater good, which He alone knows how to promote.

Perseverance is the last condition for a good prayer: for as it is the crown of virtue, so it gives the finishing touch to our prayer. If God sometimes defers granting our requests, it is to make us sensible of His gifts, to try our fidelity and submission, to reward our patience, to make us redouble our fervor and continue knocking at the gate of mercy until it is opened. Those who put their trust in God, and pray with the necessary dispositions, are never confounded, but are sure sooner or later to experience the effects of His goodness; so that if our prayers in general prove ineffectual and fruitless, it is our own fault. It is because we render ourselves unworthy of receiving what we ask; it is because we do not pray for what we should, nor in the proper manner. Though God has promised to give us the things we ask of Him in prayer, He is not bound to give them to us the very moment we ask them, nor according to the manner and measure we ask them, for to do so may not be in the interest of our souls. God is pleased, indeed, sometimes to hear our prayers immediately; at other times He

requires to be prayed to for days, weeks, months, or years. At other times He grants our petitions little by little, as it were, insensibly. On this account Our Lord, exhorting us to pray, makes use of the terms "seeking" and "knocking," saying: "Seek and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you." (*Matt.* vii. 7.) And, indeed, there is nothing which our blessed Saviour seems more earnestly to inculcate in us than to persevere in prayer. In the parable of the two friends related by St. Luke, Our Lord concludes in these words: "Yet if he shall continue knocking, I say to you, although he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him." (*Luke* xi. 8.) In this parable He intends to show that His promise of granting what we ask is principally made to our perseverance in asking. "He that shall persevere to the end, he shall be saved." (*Matt.* x. 22.)

St. Alphonsus tells us that whosoever prays bears about him a sign of predestination. Prayer from its very nature is associated with joy; it is the occupation of the angels and blessed in heaven, the home of all bliss, where supreme happiness reigns forever.

We should pray not only for ourselves, but also for others. The reason is because then our prayer is grounded on charity. We are taught this in the Lord's Prayer, the model of all prayers. St. Paul repeatedly recommended himself to the

prayers of the faithful, and St. James writes: "Pray one for another, that you may be saved, for the continual prayer of the just man availeth much." (*James* v. 16.) Therefore, besides praying for ourselves, let us make intercession for the conversion of sinners, the enlightenment of unbelievers, the unity of all Christians in the true Faith, and for final perseverance in it; for the sick and dying, for those in danger, for our parents and relatives, friends and enemies; for the rulers of the Church and of the nation; for those who suffer persecution, distress in mind or body, or any other kind of misery and hardship: and God, the Giver of all good gifts, will bestow His blessings abundantly both upon them and us, through Jesus Christ Our Lord, whose name be blessed forever.

OBJECTIONS

1. *By her sacramentals and blessings the Church fosters superstition.*

It is superstition to ascribe to certain things a power which they have neither by nature nor by divine ordinance nor by the prayer of the Church. Therefore the Church teaches that they sin by superstition who ascribe to certain things a power which God has not given to them. But the prayers and blessings of the Church are endowed by God with grace: therefore it is not superstition to use them. That simple folks among Catholics sometimes are not quite correct in their

notions on this point is excusable. Ignorance or a wrong conception of the subject is mostly to blame. But it is a well-known fact that the Church, through her bishops and priests, strenuously combats superstition whenever and wherever it appears. Hence the Church *does not* foster superstition.

2. *God knows all things: He knows our needs; why, then, declare them to Him in prayer?*

By prayer we do not intend to tell God our needs as if He knew them not; neither do we intend to force Him, so to say, to do our will. We simply confess that we need His help, and by this confession we desire to do homage to Him. He who refuses to ask God for His gifts is proud, and "God resisteth the proud, and gives grace to the humble." (*James* iv. 6.) God does not need our prayer, but we need it; first, to do homage to God, and secondly, to persevere in humility, and thus make ourselves worthy of His gifts.

3. *God's will is immutable. By prayer we try to influence it: therefore prayer is against His will.*

Prayer is by no means intended to influence or change God's will. God foresaw from all eternity the prayer which is said at a certain moment; and in consideration thereof resolved from all eternity to grant a certain grace to the petitioner, which resolution is carried into effect when the prayer is said, and thus the condition foreseen by God is fulfilled.

4. *What about the so-called "miraculous" hearing of prayers?*

In creating the world God comprised in His plan the needs, the voluntary acts, and therefore also the prayers of men. For this very reason the granting of these prayers is but the execution of His eternal will. To us this may sometimes appear miraculous, but "the things that are impossible with men are possible with God." (*Luke xviii. 27.*)

Examples

HOLY WATER

The origin of the pious use of holy water in the Church dates back to the earliest times. St. Chrysostom remarks on this ancient practice: "Because to-day the water was blessed, the faithful take some of it to their homes and preserve it throughout the year. And then there occurs what appears miraculous: this water is not corrupted, but remains as fresh for two or three years as if it had been drawn to-day."

About the middle of the ninth century, when the use of holy water became known more and more, Pope Leo IV ordered it to be blessed every Sunday before Mass.

To receive the full benefit of holy water we must use it with true faith and devotion, and not from mere custom and without attention.

ST. PHILIP NERI'S LOVE OF PRAYER

St. Philip Neri devoted much of his time to

prayer. During the course of his studies he visited every day some of the churches in Rome. Often also he would spend the whole night in prayer, and was so overwhelmed with spiritual joy as not to be able to stand. Sometimes he was heard, as he lay prostrate on the floor, to cry out: "Enough, O Lord, enough! Behold, I die unless thy sweetness is withheld." Many ecstasies and extraordinary graces accompanied his prayers. Sometimes his body was raised in the air, and his face appeared radiant, shining with a heavenly light.

THE CHILD'S PRAYER

During a mission, the missionary Father one evening was busily engaged in hearing the men's confessions when a little girl, about twelve years old, approached the confessional and said to the priest: "Father, my father will not come to confession. He scolds and storms at the mission; and yet he needs it so much. Tell me what to do to make him go to confession." The good missionary gently replied: "My child, this is a case in which you can help very much. You know that Our Lord promised to hear those who pray very earnestly: do you now pray with a pure heart, and persevere, praying in the name of Jesus, and you may be sure that God will hear and grant your wish. Pray, then, for your father's conversion."

A few days later the girl returned and, weeping, told the missionary that her prayers had

been of no avail; her father was as angry as ever at the mission, and had broken out into violent curses when it had been mentioned. Now the priest turned to her, apparently stern, and said: "That is your fault. If you had prayed as I told you, with true devotion and full confidence in the promise of Our Lord, by this time your prayer would have been heard. Go now and pray again; but pray better and more fervently than before."

The child, still weeping, knelt before the altar of the Blessed Virgin, and prayed with renewed fervor. Two days later she returned and, radiant with joy, told the missionary: "O Father, my father is converted. He went to hear a sermon, and when God's great goodness and mercy was explained he was so moved that he went to confession and was reconciled with God."

THE POWER OF PRAYER

Cardinal Gibbons relates:

I was once called in a Southern city to the bedside of a gentleman who was suffering from a protracted disease. He had been a lifelong infidel; yet he was a most cultivated and polite gentleman, and would not intentionally give offense or pain to any one. After entering the room I began to set before him, as well as I could, the teachings of the Christian religion, and to impress upon him the obligation of accepting the claims of the Catholic Church. He listened to

me with great patience and attention till I had exhausted all the arguments that suggested themselves to my mind. When I was done he thanked me for my interest, but said that my words did not remove the difficulties from his mind; there was a chasm which had not been bridged over.

While I admired the candor and sincerity of the patient, I was mortified at the failure of my efforts to convert him. I was determined to make another effort to convert him.

"You certainly admit," said I, "the existence of One Supreme Being, the Creator and Lord of all things, visible and invisible?"

"That," he replied, "can not be denied; for all creation must have a first great cause."

"You admit," said I again, "that this Supreme Being is endowed with supreme intelligence, for He must possess, in an eminent degree, all the attributes possessed by His most intelligent creatures?"

"Reason assures me of this," he said.

"You admit," I continued, "that this Supreme Being takes an interest in His creatures, that He loves us, that He possesses all the affection and paternal solicitude which an earthly father has for his children: in a word, that He is eminently our Father?"

"That," he replied, "can not be denied."

"You admit, therefore, that He may be moved by our prayers and entreaties?"

"Most assuredly," he answered.

"Then," said I, "you admit the utility and necessity of prayer?"

This, he said, necessarily followed from what I had said. I asked him then to promise me to offer up daily this short prayer to the Supreme Being: "O God, give me light to see the truth, and grace to follow it." He promised to do so.

A few days later, visiting him again, I found him quite changed. Joyfully he professed his belief in the Catholic religion, and begged me to baptize him.

Here is a striking instance of the power of prayer. One ray of God's light implored through it did more than all arguments.

CONCLUSION

An Instruction on the Christian Life

THE following treatise is a translation of a pastoral letter addressed to the faithful of the diocese of Perugia by Pope Leo XIII in 1868, when he was archbishop of that See. The admirable instructions and maxims contained in this letter are a summary of the rules by which every Catholic should be guided in order to preserve the Faith and to fulfil the commandments, on which depends salvation.

1. A Catholic Christian is one that professes the true Faith and law of Jesus Christ. The only depository and infallible teacher of this Faith and these laws is the Catholic, apostolic, Roman Church. The Catholic Christian, therefore, is most careful that in every act of his life he appear not unworthy of this glorious profession, and that he keep himself united to this Church.

2. It is not enough to believe in the depths of one's heart the truths that God has revealed, as it is not enough to belong to the Church merely by the internal adhesion of the mind; it is, besides, indispensably required that faith should manifest itself by external works, and that the profession of religion should show itself and be dominant over all the actions, both internal and

external, of the true believer. For Our Lord has said that "he that believeth not is already judged"; and it is also declared in the Word of God that faith without works is dead; furthermore, that the eternal Judge will demand an account of our works, and will render to every one, even to those that believe, reward or punishment.

3. Being sure of the divinity of this Faith, the true Catholic believes the truths which that Faith teaches, however much they may transcend his reason; he believes them when he hears them contradicted by those that are called wise by the world; he believes them all without exception; he believes them more firmly than he believes what his own eyes see or what he learns from man's authority.

4. Such a Christian considers his Faith as a gift from heaven and a priceless treasure, far surpassing any earthly possession, because it raises man up to the knowledge of God and secures for him his eternal destiny. He is very careful, therefore, not to cast it away, and never to sacrifice it to the requirements of the world or the favor of man, even though all his earthly possessions and life itself were at stake.

5. He rejects with horror those maxims of modern misbelievers: "One religion is as good as another," "Hell is only a bugbear," "The faith of the heart alone suffices for salvation," and many others of the same kind which are nowadays cur-

rent. And he rejects them because he knows that God is one, and therefore that Faith must be one, religion one; and religion can not be modeled after the whims and opinions of men, but only by the authority of God in His revelation.

6. Jealous of his Faith, he holds himself aloof from those miserable men who openly attack it, and he is also on his guard against the wiles of those who oppose it by underhand means; recognizing the former by their bold contempt of all that is sacred, and the latter by their hypocritical pretense to reconcile religion with the license of the age.

7. He has a horror of reading bad books, considering it just as pernicious to the mind as poison is to the body. He does not let himself be allured to such reading by the charms of style and other attractions, by which errors are spread, perverting the souls of men. He avoids receiving such books; but should they happen to fall into his hands, he casts them from him at once; and when he sees them in the hands of a friend, he counsels him to do the same.

8. He knows that the Catholic Church was founded by Jesus Christ as a perfect society, with authority to make laws to punish the guilty and to expel rebels from her midst. Hence he professes himself to be in all things docile and obedient to her; he has a salutary fear of her punishments and censures, though they may be laughed

at by the world; for he remembers the plenitude of power bestowed upon her by her divine Founder when He said: "Whatsoever you shall bind upon earth shall be bound also in heaven."

9. Knowing that there are in the Catholic Church certain fountains of heavenly grace, which are the sacraments, the true Christian feels grateful to God who in His mercy established them; and he is solicitous to use them to his own advantage, whilst at the same time he feels a lively sorrow for those unfortunate men who neglect or despise them.

10. He sets a special value on the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist; because in the former he finds the remedy for his faults and strength against his weakness; and from the latter he draws the most efficacious help to practise virtue and an ineffable plenitude of heavenly consolations in receiving the Author of Grace. He is not deterred from their frequentation by human considerations or by the mockery of the world; he has deeply engraven in his soul those useful sayings of Our Lord: "Unless you do penance you shall all likewise perish"; "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood you shall not have life in you."

11. The sincere Catholic is also recognized by his reverent and devout conduct in the house of God. He is not brought thither by vain curiosity

or because it is the fashion, but by unfeigned piety and the filial duty of rendering to God an external tribute of dependence. He is deeply grieved by the conduct of those who go to the house of God to profane it, to scoff at the devotion of others, and to turn to scorn the venerable rites of religion.

12. He knows that in the Catholic Church there exists an order of priests to whom Jesus Christ, the eternal High Priest, has committed the exalted power to consecrate and to offer up the Divine Sacrifice, to dispense the holy sacraments, and to preserve and preach His heavenly doctrines. He therefore looks upon priests as the ambassadors of God; he respects their dignity, and shows his respect in every act; he listens to their teachings with docility, and corresponds with them; he feels compassion for the failings that may appear in priests, since they are not free from human frailty; and he feels it bitterly when he sees that the world sets no value on their sacred character and opposes their august mission.

13. He recognizes, moreover, that to the priestly order, disposed in hierarchical degrees, belongs the care of governing and feeding the Christian flock, with that authority which Christ gave to St. Peter and the apostles, and which passed as a heritage to their lawful successors. Above all things he shows himself devoted and

obedient to the vicar of Christ, the Roman Pontiff, the universal Father and Teacher, in whom is centered the plenitude of power to rule the whole Catholic family. He is, moreover, submissive to and has a filial respect for the bishop who has the spiritual government of the diocese to which he belongs; and to his pastor, to whose care are intrusted the souls of the parish.

14. He also recognizes the infallibility of authority which, in virtue of the unfailing assistance of the Divine Spirit, the Church exercises in matters of faith, worship, and morality; hence he accepts with docility and obedience the decisions of the supreme See, and conforms to them his opinions and thoughts; and he is careful never to abandon this guide in the search after truth or in accepting the changeable and novel opinions of the age.

15. He bears in mind that the true Christian must profess not the Faith only, but also the laws of Jesus Christ; he applies himself effectively to learning all the duties that bind Him to God, and all the precepts and instructions laid down by our Redeemer in the holy gospels, and he is anxious to observe them exactly, to observe them all: knowing that he is guilty of damnation who violates the law even in one point, because he despises the divine authority which established the whole law.

16. Faithful to this law, he loves his fellow-

creatures, he loves his relatives, he loves his country, but all in due order and proportion: loving God above all things, which is the greatest and first commandment. In all things he places His honor and service first. Therefore he hates the profanation of the holy name of God, which fills him with indignation and horror; and without wishing evil to the swearer, he admonishes him charitably, as a misguided brother who offers an insult to the common Father; and if he is not in a position to do this, he at least prays for the offender that he may be enlightened, and, by acts of praise and benediction, repairs as best he can the offense offered to the Most High.

17. Sundays and festivals are for the sincere Catholic truly God's days, because God expressly reserves them for His honor, making it a solemn command in the Old Law, which He confirmed in the New; threatening chastisements on transgressors and promising rich rewards to the observers of this commandment. The faithful Catholic considers that on no account can he refuse to God such a just tribute of respect, from which man himself derives benefit. He is, therefore, very careful to avoid profaning these days or doing servile work, no matter what temporal gain may offer; he endeavors also to cause them to be observed by others, by his example and by using his authority toward those that depend upon him.

18. He respects his parents, superiors, and

masters, because he remembers that he that resists authority resists God; and he obeys in all not displeasing to God, the Father and supreme Lord of all creatures. If he himself is a father or master, he brings his children and servants up in religion and the holy fear of God, watches over their conduct, admonishes them of their faults, preserves them from occasions of sin, and guides them by word and example.

19. In the second precept of Christian charity, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," he clearly recognizes the will of God that he should do unto others what he would wish them to do unto himself, and that neighbors should all look upon one another as children of the same heavenly Father. And he applies this rule to works of mercy, both spiritual and corporal, for the love of God; considering them not as matters of supererogation or mere courtesy, but as an express duty and as a characteristic mark of the true follower of Our Lord, who said: "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

20. He recognizes therein also the divine prohibition to do to others what he would not wish to have done to himself; to injure his neighbor in his person, his honor, or his property. He therefore respects the persons and property of others; he abhors unjust gains, is faithful to all his bargains, and never prefers interest to duty.

He weighs his words, lest he should detract from the good name of any one; he will not divulge or circulate the detractions that he may hear; he does not reveal secrets and defects that might lessen the esteem of any one; of public faults he either does not speak at all, or, if speaking, he seeks to excuse the intention of him that is so accused.

21. He considers his body as a temple of the Holy Ghost, because it is the dwelling-place of a soul regenerated by the grace of God, and called to a heavenly inheritance. He knows that to debase it by sensual pleasure is to degrade the dignity of man, and to cast reproach on the sacred character of a Christian; it is to offend the spotless eye of God, from which nothing is hidden, and to prepare for himself misery in this life and eternal perdition in the next. To keep from falling into this quagmire, he guards his mind from unbecoming thoughts and his heart from immodest desires; he flees from dangerous occasions; he does not give himself up to luxury and the vanities of the world; he avoids improper company and conversations; he keeps away from theaters and amusements which would endanger the purity of his soul; and above all things he is armed with the most effectual shield of prayer, and he walks ever in the presence of God.

22. After the commandments of God, it is his aim not to transgress those of the Church, be-

cause he remembers the sentence of Our Lord: "He that heareth you heareth me: and he that despiseth you despiseth me." Therefore he never neglects to hear Mass on Sundays and feast-days, and he hears it with attention and devotion. He is not imposed upon by those that laugh at Christian mortification, but he faithfully obeys the commandment which limits the kind of food and prescribes fasting at certain times; for he remembers that Our Lord commanded us to "bring forth fruit worthy of penance." With no less exactness he fulfils whatever else is enjoined by the authority of the Church, especially the annual confession and the Easter communion, performing those duties not merely through routine and from human respect, but from the consciousness of duty.

23. He has an exalted idea of Christian piety, which inspires man with lofty ideas and prepares him for noble undertakings. He preserves those germs of piety implanted in his heart in early years, and from them reaps the fruits of pure religion and mature virtue. He serves God as a loving and dutiful son; and, in particular, he cherishes devotion to the Blessed Virgin, to whom he has recourse in all his wants and from whom he obtains all manners of help to remain firm in the Faith and in performance of his duties, and to escape the corruption of the world.

24. Finally, he never forgets these three truths,

which should be the guide and breastplate of the true Christian on every occasion:

1. Sin is the real evil, which should always be feared.

2. The grace of God is the true good, which should always be prized.

3. The salvation of the soul is the all-important business, which should ever be attended to.

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